$10.00

5.00

Designing is like a GAME with the

PATCHWORK PRIMER

The first practical guide to patchwork and geometric designs

LEARN HOW TO DESIGN BEAUTIFUL QUILTS, PILLOWS, FASHION ITEMS, DECORATIVE ACCESSORIES, NEEDLEWORK AND CRAFT PROJECTS, AND THEN MAKE THEM IN ACTUAL SIZE.

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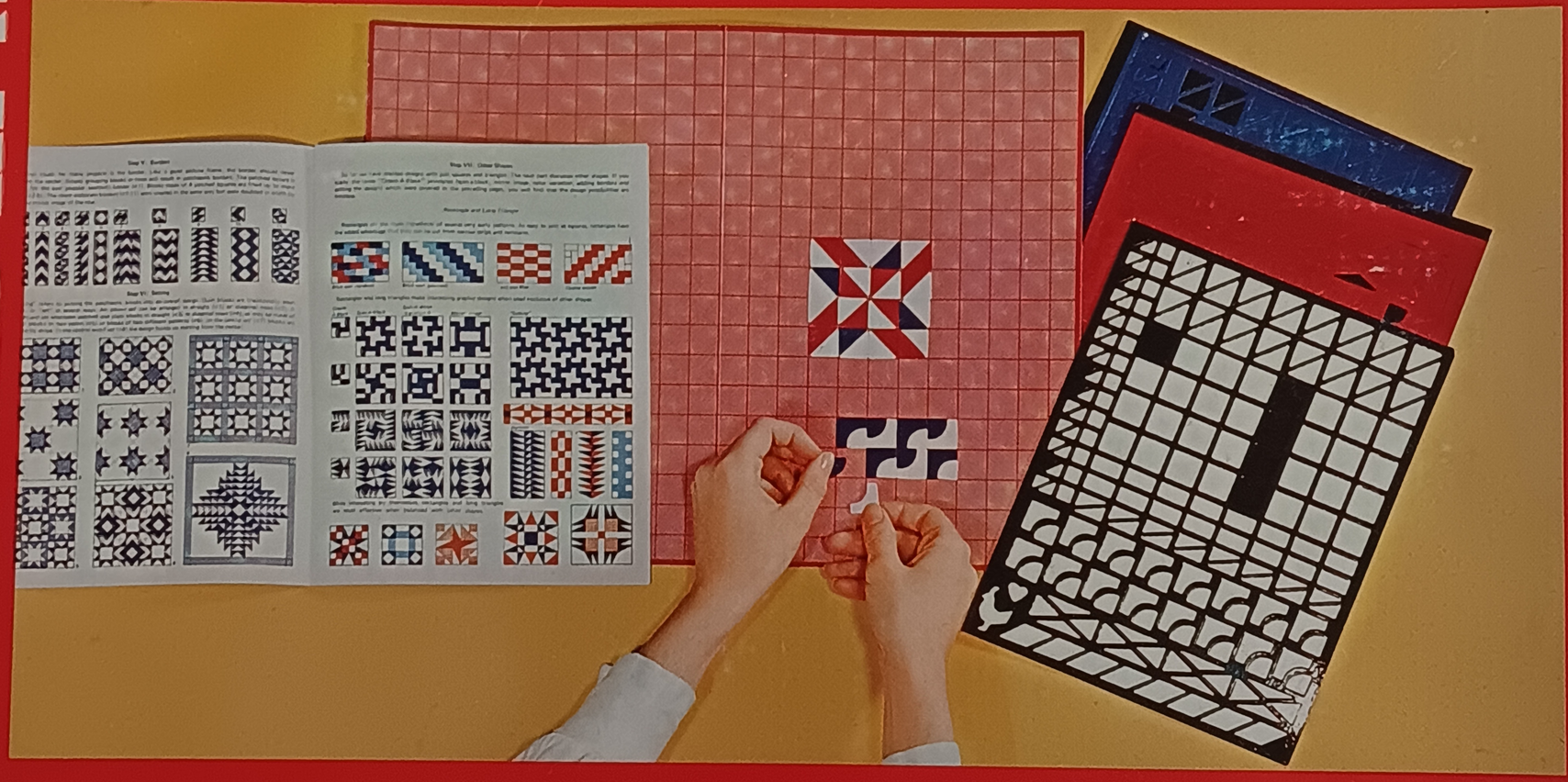


EVERYTHING YOU NEED IS IN THIS BOX.

THE FIRST PATCHWORK "TOOL KIT" – FOR THE BEGINNER who always thought patchwork too complicated to try . . . *FOR THE PRO* who likes to create original patterns. Great for needlepoint and other crafts too!

THE TOOLS: hundreds of vinyl pieces in 11 geometric shapes, 4 colors, full size templates of each shape; laminated design board; illustrated manual with hundreds of designs and instructions for making a quilt and other projects.

THE GAME: arrange the vinyl pieces on the design board. They stick where you put them . . . lift right up and move around easily as experiment with patterns.

When you finish your design in miniature, use the templates as patterns for cutting. It's simple . . . it's quick . . . it's a whole lot of fun.

THE PATCHWORK PRIME

THE PATCHWORK PRIMER MANUAL

THE PATCHWORK PRIMER

The aim of the PATCHWORK PRIMER is to enable everyone to share actively in the heritage of American patchwork design and further develop it in his own way. While books on patchwork record the history and analyze the development of patterns, magazines furnish instructions for specific patterns and museums display the finest samples of this art, the PATCHWORK PRIMER presents for the first time a very practical approach. It is designed to be a Learn-By-Doing experience.

The Primer contains:

PRIMER PATCHES (vinyl shapes): From a host of familiar patchwork patterns we have selected 11 of the most versatile shapes which, in combination with one another, allow you to create endless numbers of designs as simple or as intricate as you wish to make them. The shapes, scaled to a handy size, will hold in place when arranged on the design board, but are easily picked up to be used again and again.

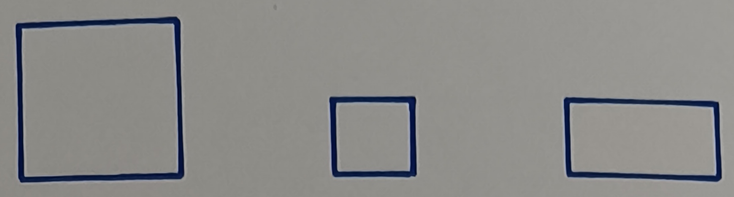
DESIGN BOARD: The smooth, laminated surface of the design board provides a neutral background color for the shapes. Marked with guidelines corresponding to the patches, it allows you to lay out designs for articles as small as a potholder or as big as a full size quilt, wall design or tile floor.

TEMPLATES: For each of the 11 *Primer* shapes there is a corresponding pre-cut cardboard template which allows you to translate your designs into projects with ease. The basic shape to which all the templates relate is a 4" square.

ILLUSTRATED MANUAL: By following the instructions and working with your shapes on the design board you will learn not only how to copy traditional designs, but how to also create your own. We hope the *Manual's* illustrations will spark your imagination and cause you to experiment; most of all we hope you will enjoy yourself!

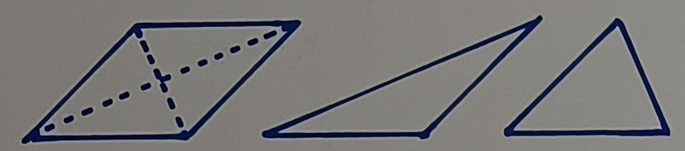
The Primer Shapes:

The most basic patchwork shapes are squares and rectangles. Their virtue lies in the ease with which they can be put together.



The next most common shapes derive from dividing squares and rectangles into two pieces.

After these elementary shapes there is a vast variety, however none is quite so popular as the diamond which makes some of the prettiest patchwork designs. (See the table on the back cover on how the shapes can be combined.)



How to Work with the Primer Shapes:

The unique advantage of using the shapes on the design board is that it lets you quickly get the visual effect of a design. By arranging the *Primer* patterns you will soon understand the relationship between all the pieces. Unlike working with fabric or paper, you can vary your design by simply picking up and moving the adhesive pieces about, thus eliminating cutting or erasing.

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Designed by **HILDE LIU** for **DISTLEFINK DESIGNS**
718 Broadway • New York, N. Y. 10003
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ROOTS OF AMERICAN PATCHWORK

Nowhere has patchwork grown into as colorful and highly developed a folk art as in America. Its roots may be traced to a happy alliance between frugality and love of beauty. Faced with the need to salvage every precious scrap, colonial and pioneer women carefully cut worn out clothing into irregular patches. These were then sewn together in a manner that resulted in the least amount of wasted fabric. Quilts pieced together this way were the first "crazy quilts." This type of patchwork has had several revivals — the strongest one in Victorian times when crazy quilts were made of taffetas, silks and velvets and their seams covered with a fretwork of fancy embroidery. However charming these quilts may be, "crazy" patchwork never attained the widespread popularity of patchwork composed of regular geometric shapes.

Early Crazy Patchwork

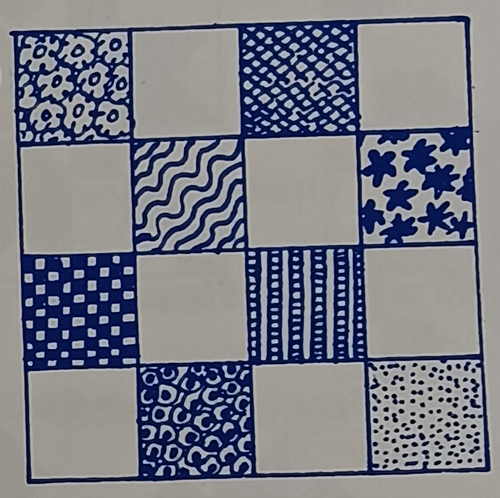
Victorian Patchwork with Embroidery

FOCUS ON DESIGN

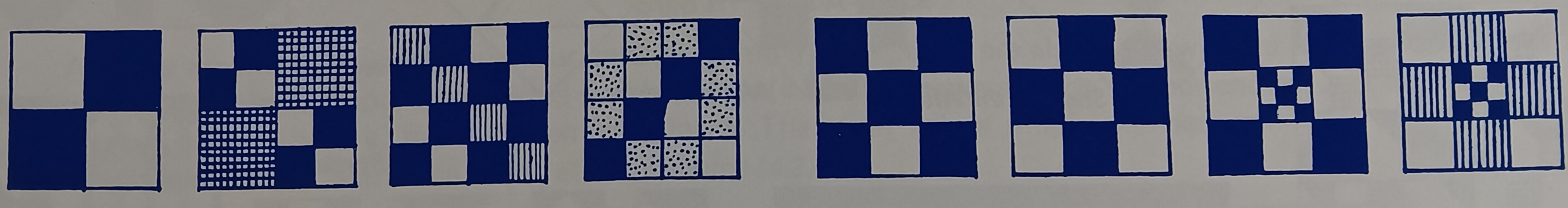
The change from early "crazy" patches to simple, regular shapes is of great significance in the history of patchwork. Design became an important element. At first this was mostly expressed in clarity of lines. Rows of squares, the simplest shape to work with, were pieced together, first at random (#1), then with care given to color arrangements (#2).

(#1)

(#2)

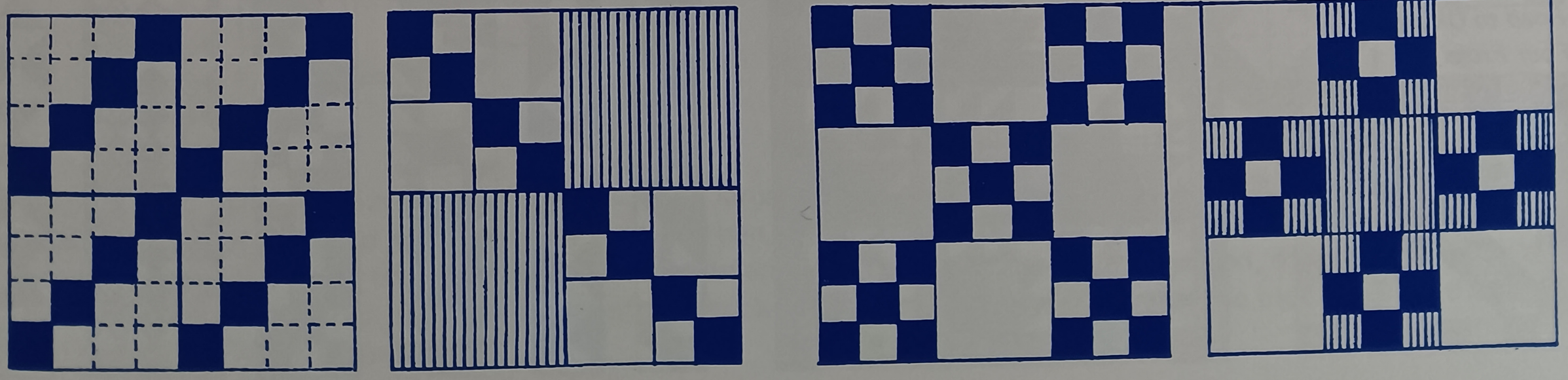


Squares of different colors and sizes were eventually pieced together in patterns to make larger squares. These larger squares, called blocks or patched squares are the basic units of patchwork. The Four and Nine-Patch illustrations below show how larger designs are built up by combining the patched squares in a simple building-block process. It was in such a fashion that the three design factors — line, color, and dimension — took root in patchwork preparing the way for what would become our most vivid and enduring folk art.

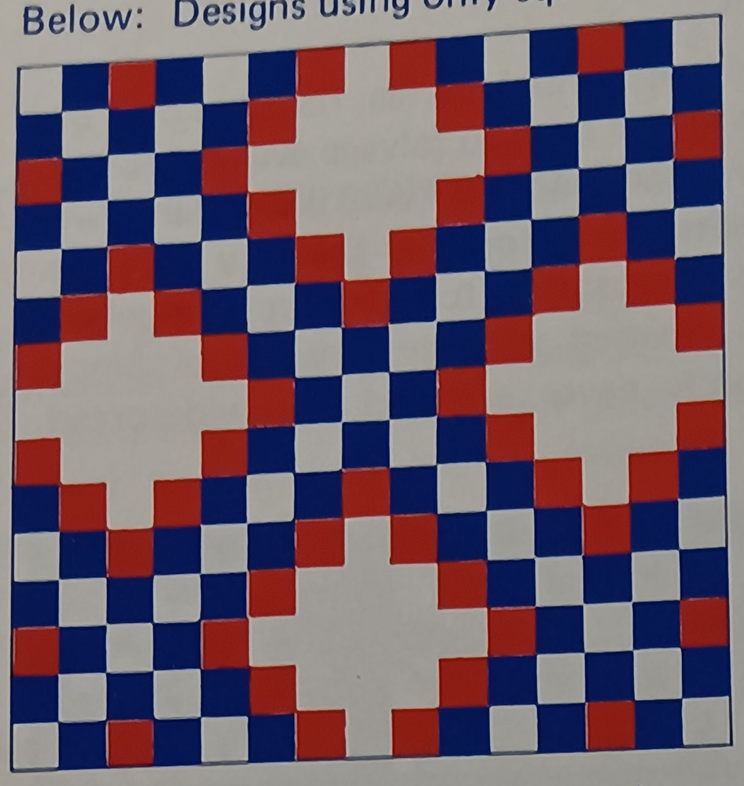


Simple Four-Patch Blocks

Nine-Patch Blocks

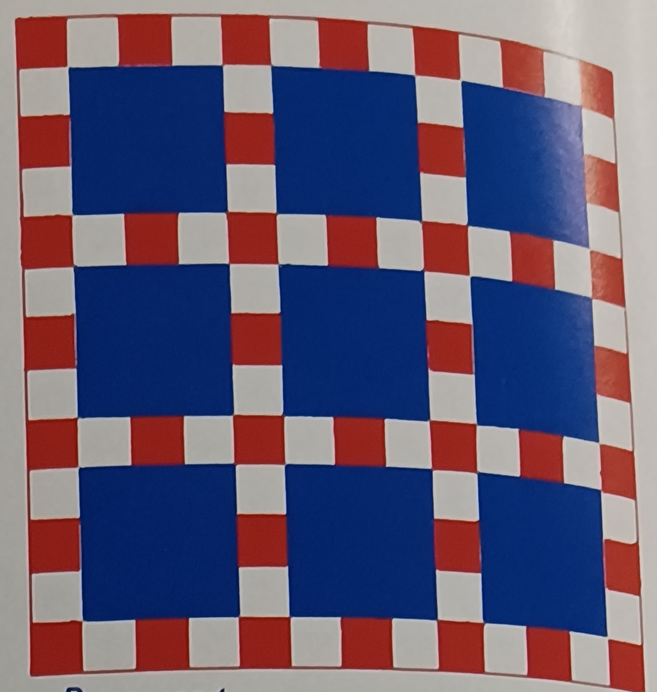


Below: Designs using only squares which you might like to try on your board.



Triple Irish Chain

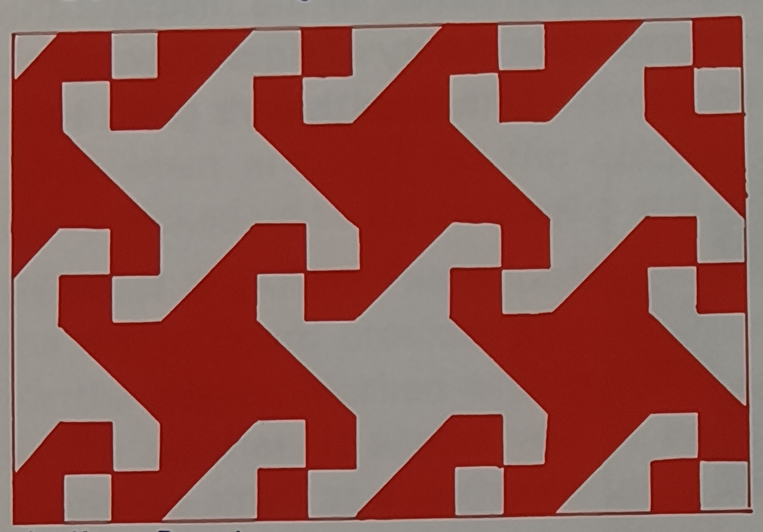
Borders



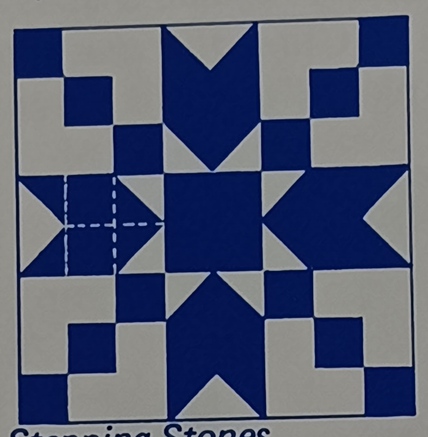
Pavement

Squares were the first regular shape used to design a pleasing overall pattern. Triangles were the next natural step in creating interesting and varied designs. These two shapes were simple to combine. Even the youngest quilter moved rapidly from a Four or Nine-Patch beginning to a pattern like *Shoofly:*

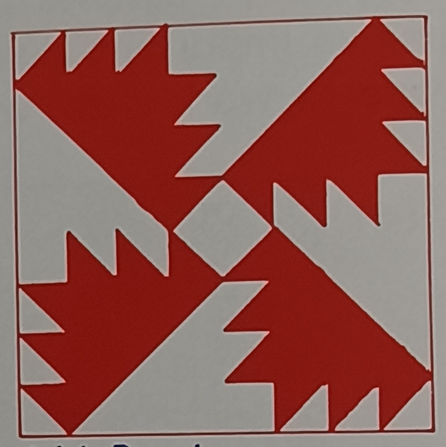
Below: Designs combining triangles and squares.



Indiana Puzzle



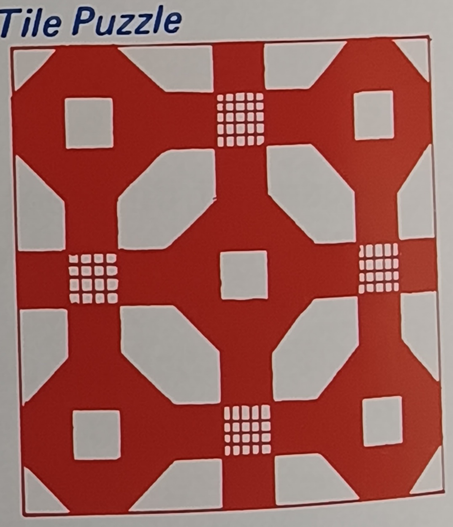
Stepping Stones



Irish Puzzle

Snow Ball

Tile Puzzle



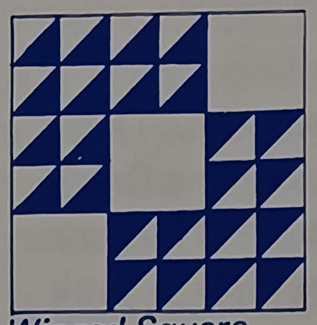
Hour Glass

Four X Star

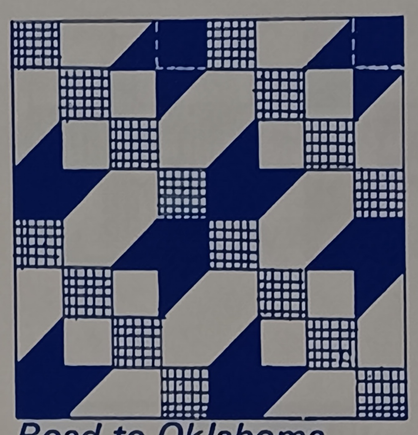
Steps to the Altar

Album Patch

Little Beech Tree

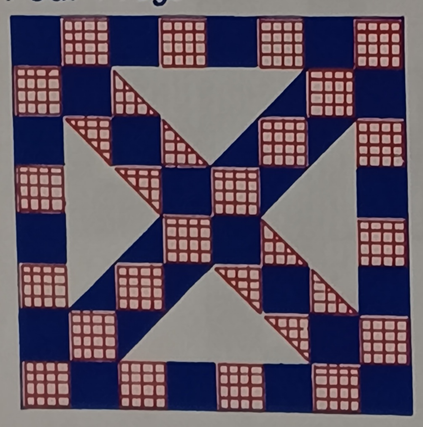


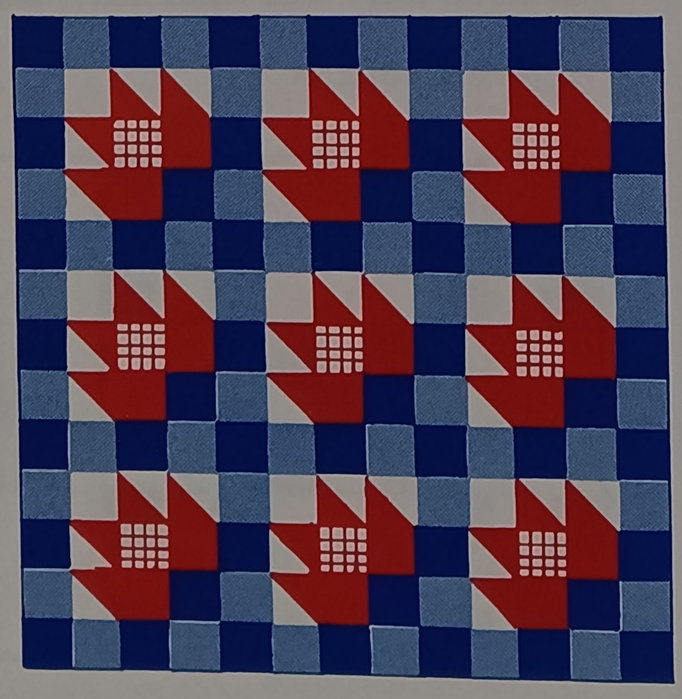
Winged Square



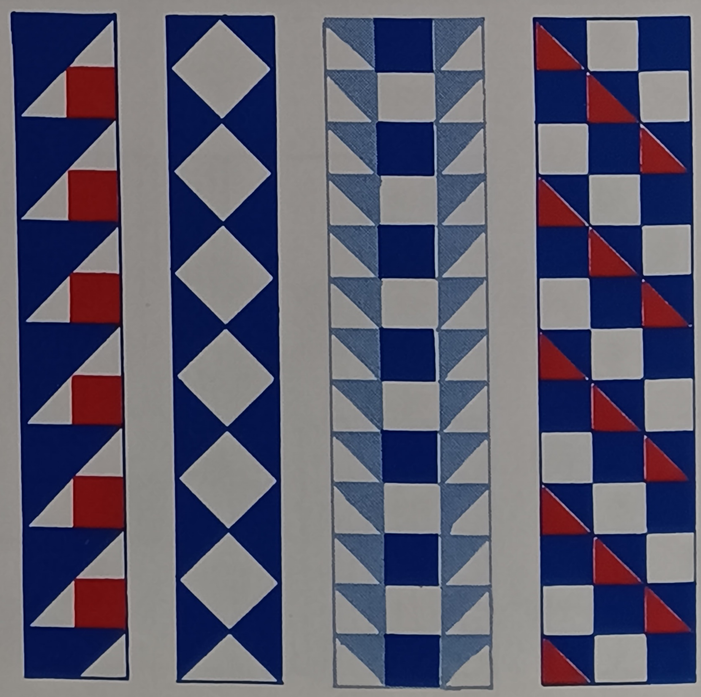
Road to Oklahoma

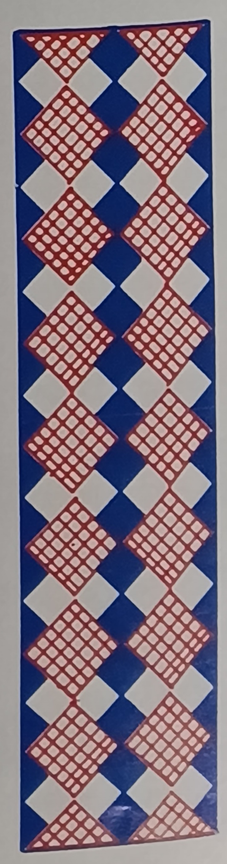
Four Frogs

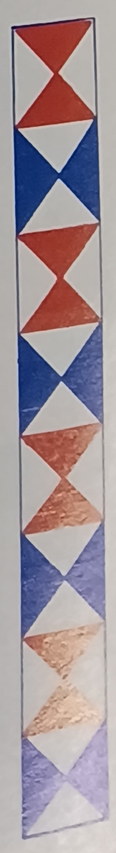




Borders







CREATE YOUR OWN DESIGN

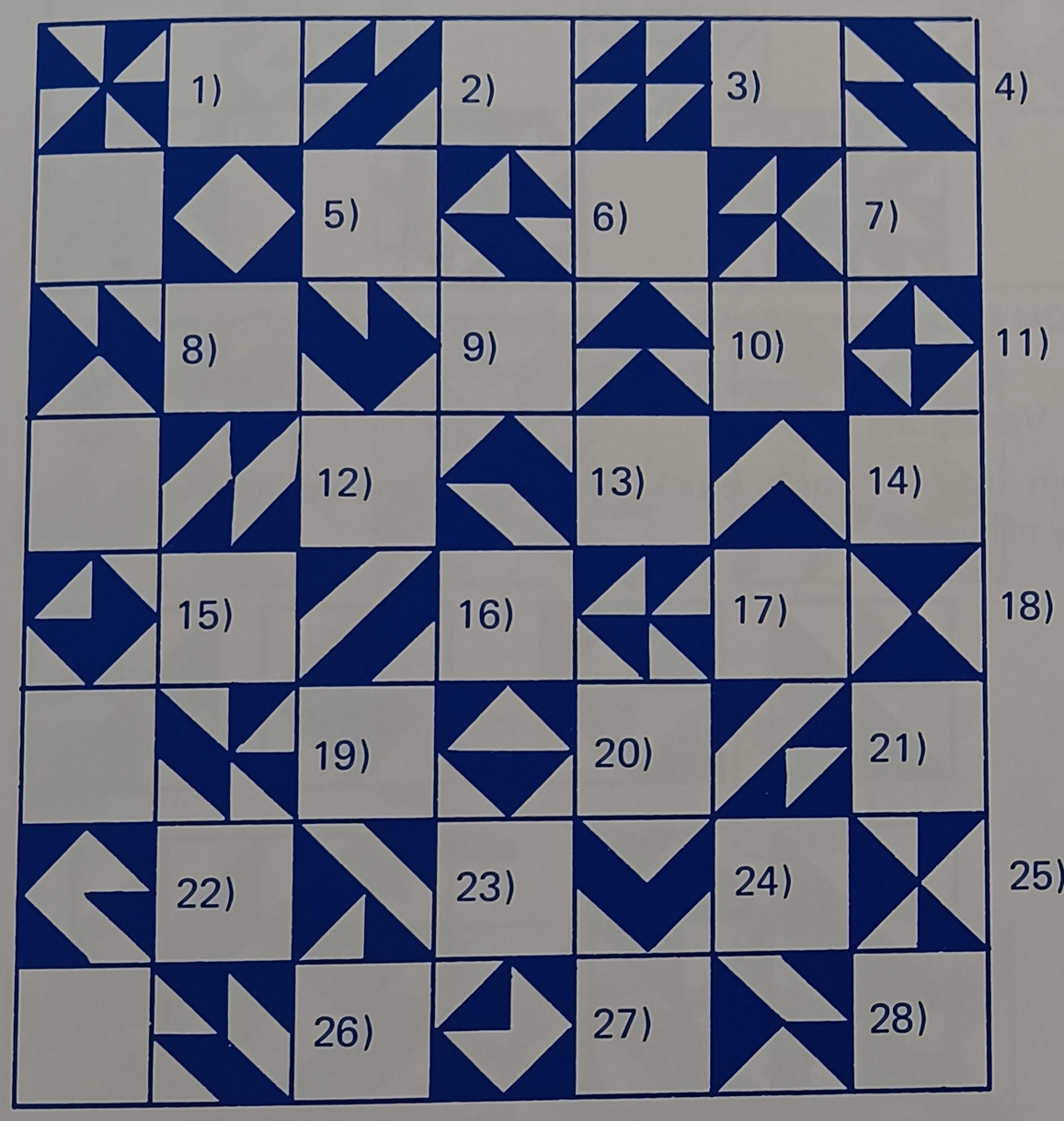
Step I: Create-A-Block

The block (or patched square), the basic unit of most patchwork projects, may be as intricate or as simple as a square made of two triangles. It is both traditional and wise for beginners to start with easy blocks first.

You can achieve many striking designs using one simple block. Using the *Primer* patches on your graph board, first take a patched square made of two triangles (#1).
Take four patched squares (#2) and arrange them so that they will form a larger block (#3).

(#1) (#2) (#3)

Next, change the position of the patched squares within the block and you will arrive at a vast number of designs (blocks 1-28).



Helpful hint: When following this exercise, place a triangle of one color on top of a square of a second color. Then simply move the *patched* squares around instead of single triangles.

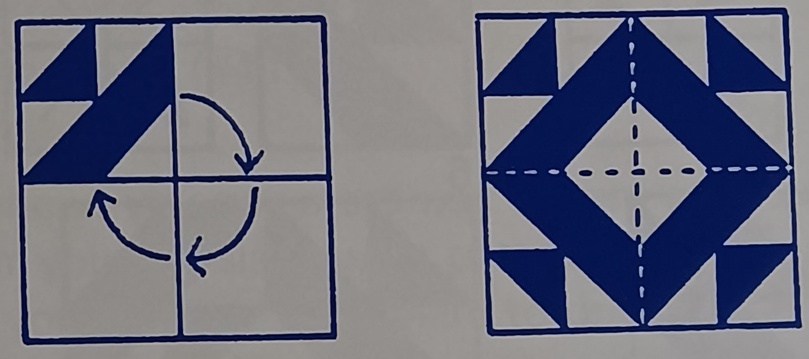
As you arrange the squares within the block, you may suddenly realize that you have created a traditional American pattern known for generations such as *Pinwheel* (#1). Despite its simplicity and popularity, this block has never lost its deserved appeal.

Although some blocks may not seem interesting by themselves, even the plainest of these can become the basis of unending variations of delightful patterns when repeated over a large area or used in combination with another block.

Step II: Spin-A-Block

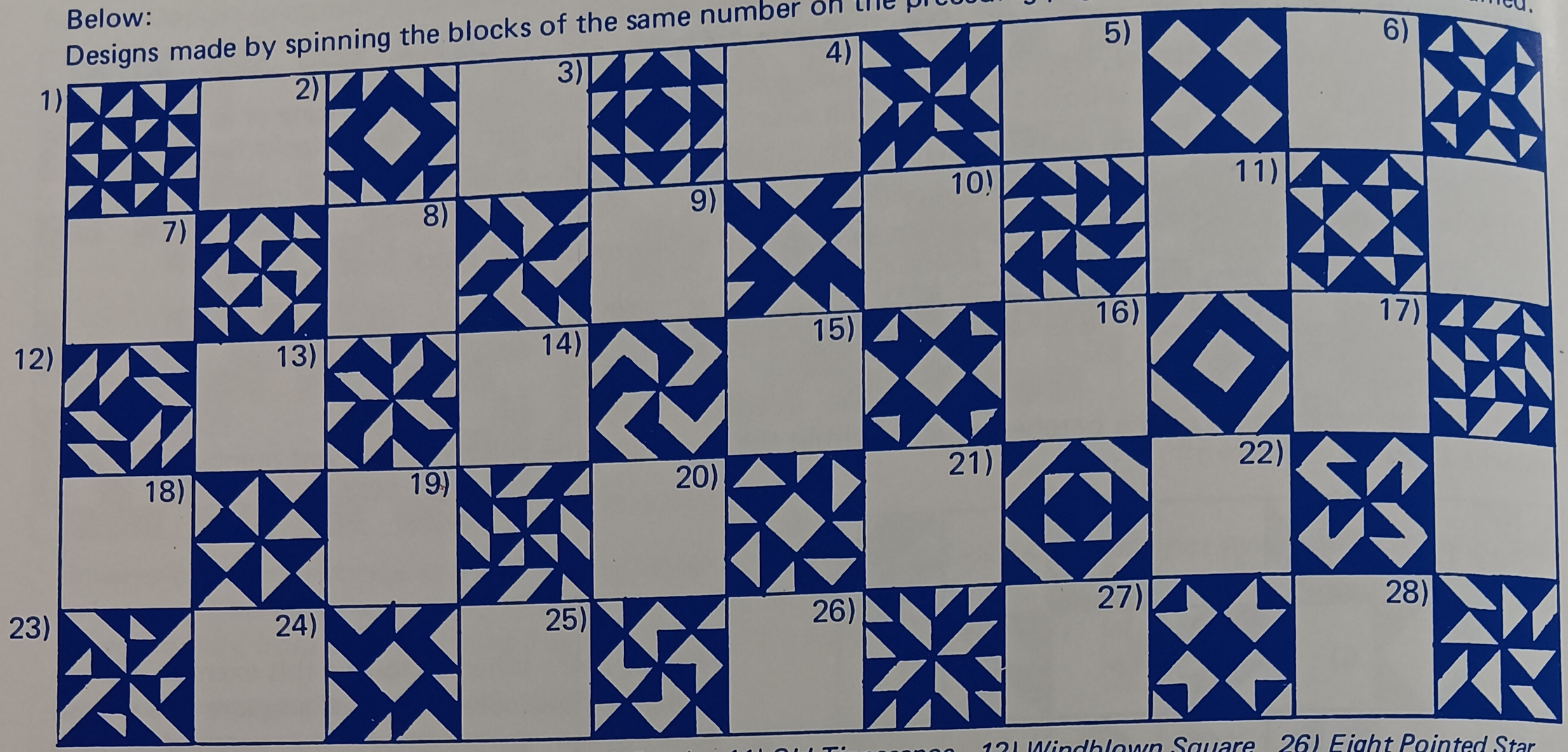
As there are many ways to group four patches within a block, there are also many ways to arrange four blocks within a larger block. Choose one of the simple blocks (#1-28) or make a block of your choice. Just as you made 4 patched squares before, make 4 identical blocks. The same way a simple patched square is "spun" in the *Pinwheel* block (#1), "spin" the block of your choice (#2).

#1) Pinwheel

#2) 

Helpful hint: Make all four blocks needed for the larger design at the beginning. Take 4 large squares; place 4 small triangles of a second color on each square. Then "spin" these "patched" blocks. (You may find tweezers handy to move the small triangles.) To help visualize any given block in a spinning position, draw the block on a piece of paper. At the right bottom corner of the block, pin the paper down; then turn the block around the pin and copy with *Primer* shapes.

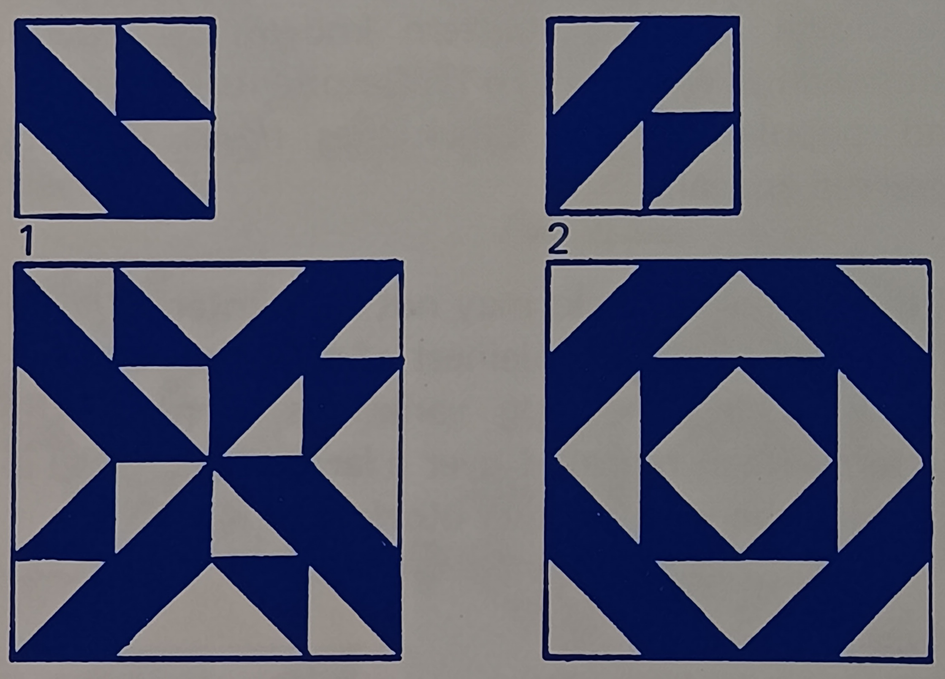
Below:
Designs made by spinning the blocks of the same number on the preceding page. Traditional patterns are named.



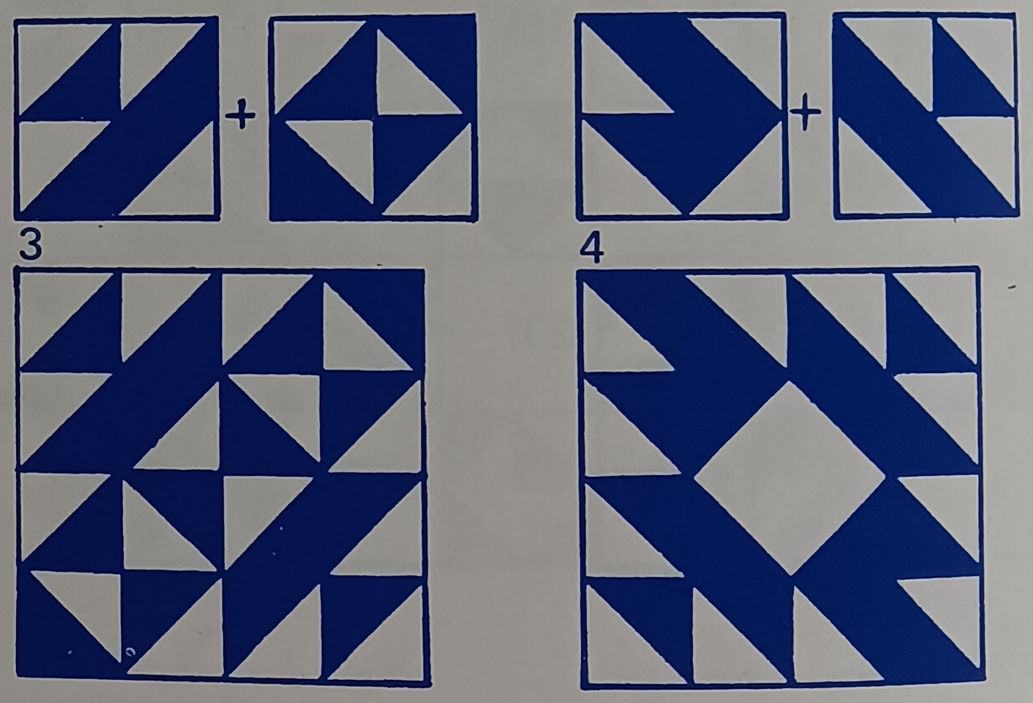
1) Broken Dishes 6) Pieced Star 10) Dutchman's Puzzle 11) Old Tippecanoe 12) Windblown Square 26) Eight Pointed Star

Step III: Variations

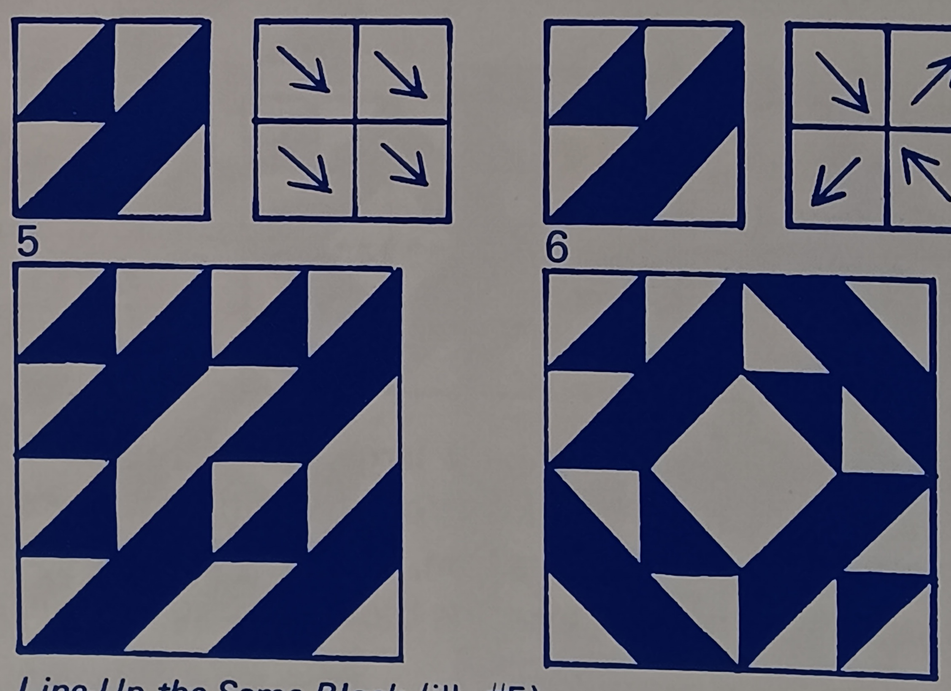
Spinning is just one way to build up a larger design from a simple block. Here are some variations of the *spinning* technique and other methods which are equally effective.



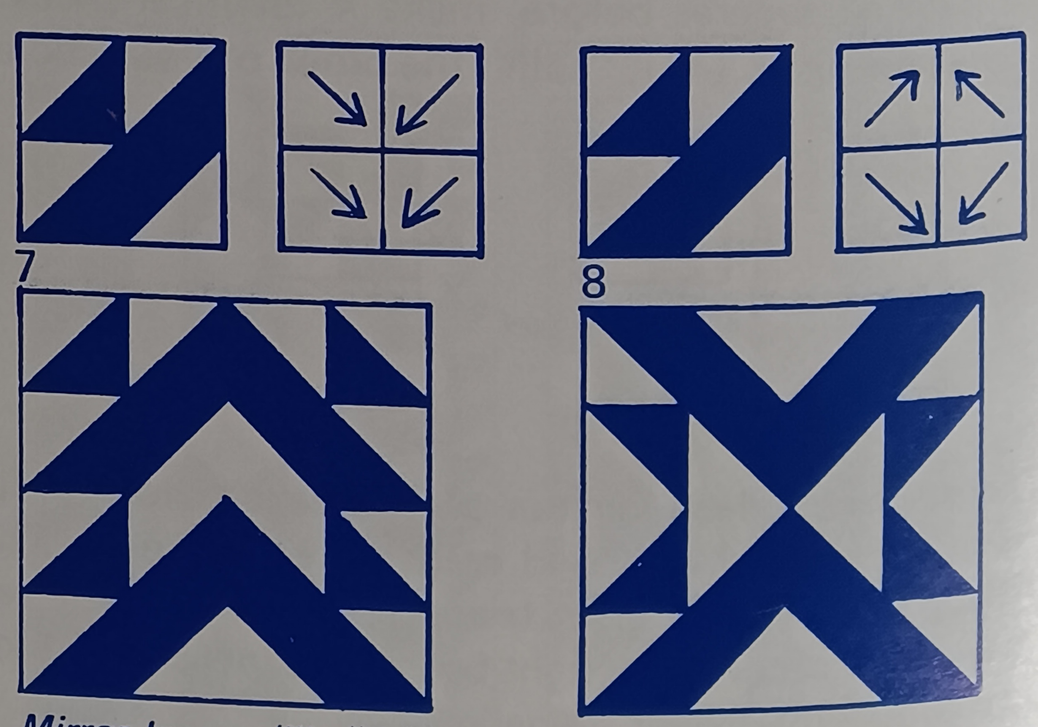
Spin-A-Block Variation A
Change the direction of the block before spinning (ill. #1,2)



Spin-A-Block Variation B
Alternate 2 different blocks (ill. #3,4)



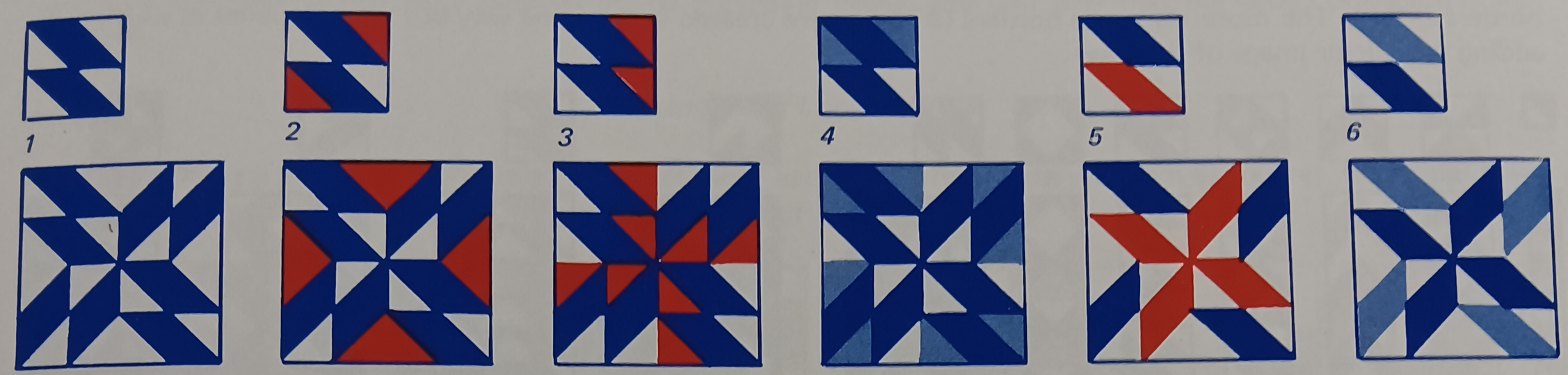
Line-Up the Same Block (ill. #5)
Point Blocks to Opposite Corners (ill. #6)

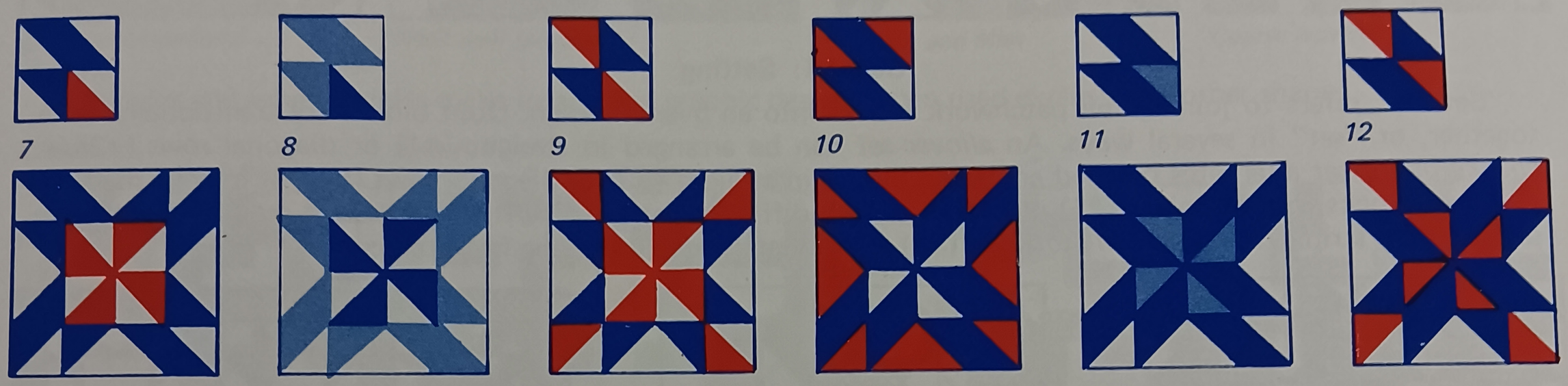


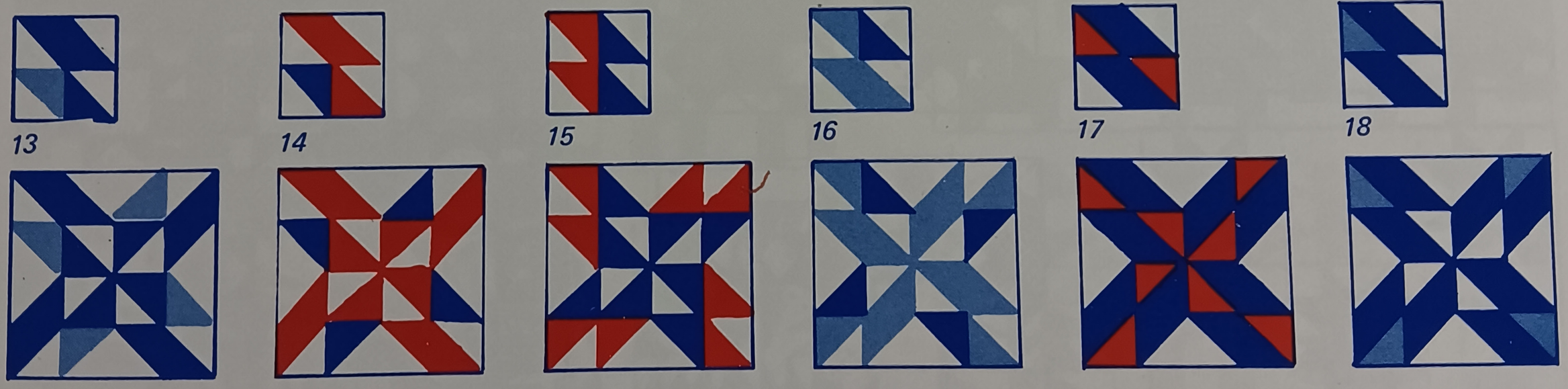
Mirror Images (ill. #7,8)

Step IV: Color Variation

So far we have shown how design variations are achieved by changing the arrangements of blocks. The illustrations below show the striking results achieved by adding another color to the original 2-color block.







These samples illustrate how you can use color to:

a) Change the background and thereby lessen the contrast between background and design (#2,3);
b) Stress a pattern within a pattern: central star (#5,6); pinwheel center (#7,8,9); 8-pointed star (9);
c) Add interest to the design without essentially changing the overall effect (#13,14);
d) Shift the weight of the design to the outside (#10) or to the center (#11,16);
e) Change the contour of the original design (#17,18).

This elementary review in color and its effect on design shows you one more way to vary a pattern. It should also alert you to the importance of color placement when you translate your pattern into actual work. To preserve the visual effect of your design, choose colors for your project that relate to one another in a similar way as the colors of the Primer shapes that you used for the layout. Whether you choose pastel colors or bold ones, prints or solids, shades of one color or daring contrasts, or finally an assortment of everything, keep in mind the following rule of thumb: Substitute the dark blue with the darkest of your actual colors, the white with the lightest. Red represents bright and forceful medium colors, light blue a regular medium color. The color of the graph board will in most cases be a neutral shade that will not compete with the other colors, but blend in or serve as a pleasant background.

Circle-in-the-Square

The versatility of these two shapes represents a challenge to even the most inventive mind. Grouped into blocks, they command a wide range of design effects from the ornamentally baroque to the graphically modern.

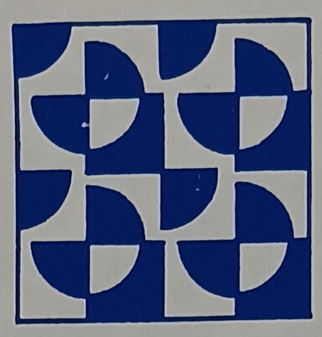
The patches of the *Circle-in-the-Square* are most often used without the addition of other shapes and are set in the simplest way.

Create-A-Block

Line-Up

Spin-A-Block

Spin-A-Block Variation A



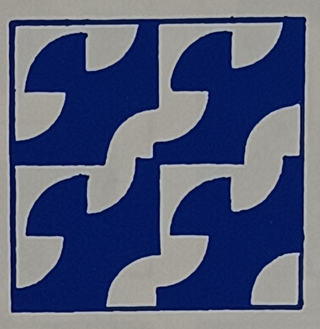
Traditional Designs

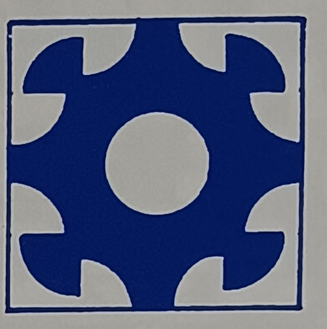
Drunkard's Path

Fool's Puzzle

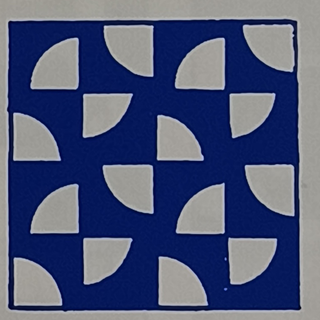
Wonder of the World

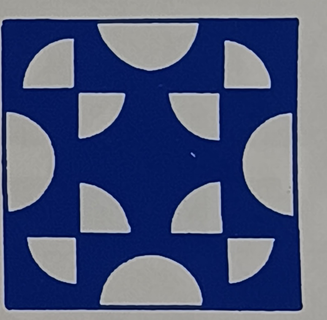
Around the World

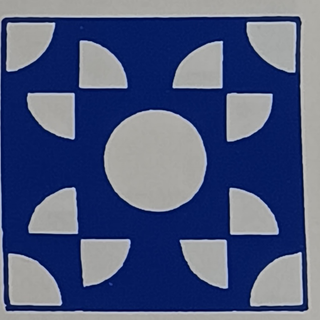




Vine of Friendship

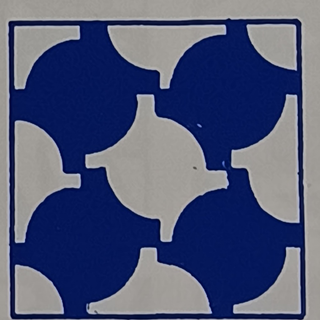


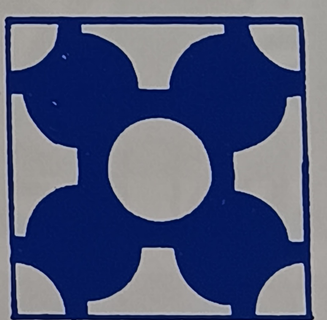


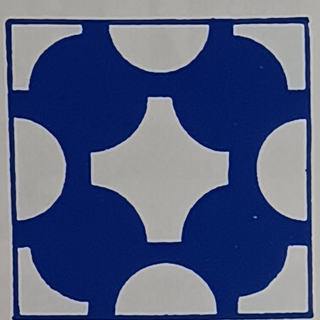


All Over

Millwheel

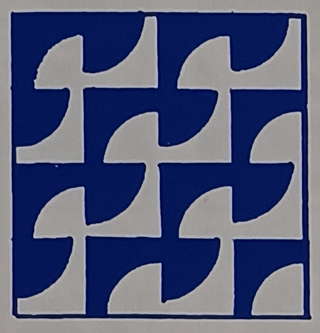


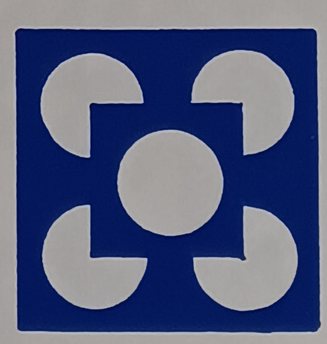


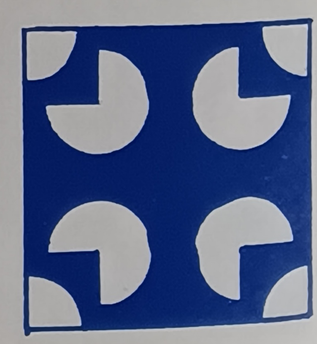


Robbing Peter to Pay Paul

Snowball

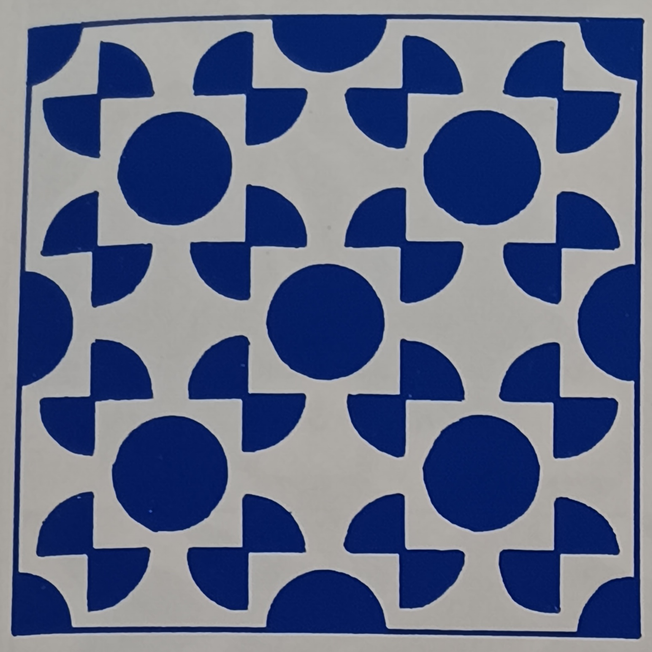




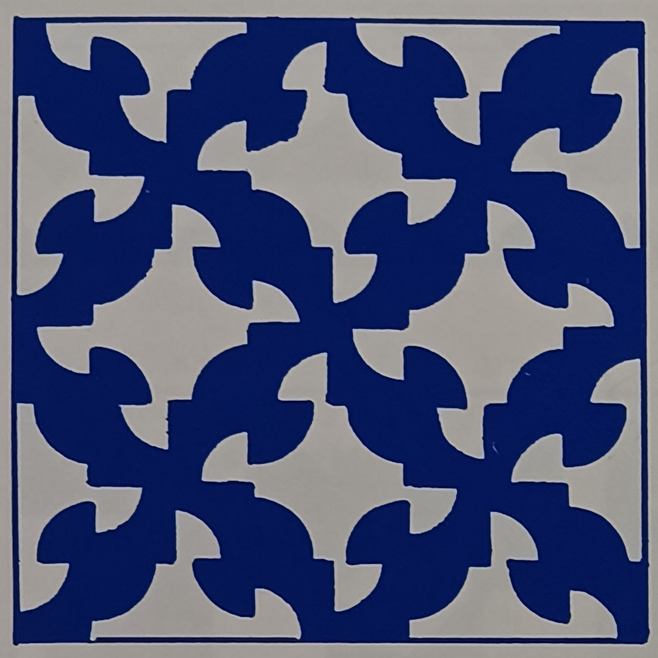


Below: Designs made of *Circle-in-the-Square pattern*

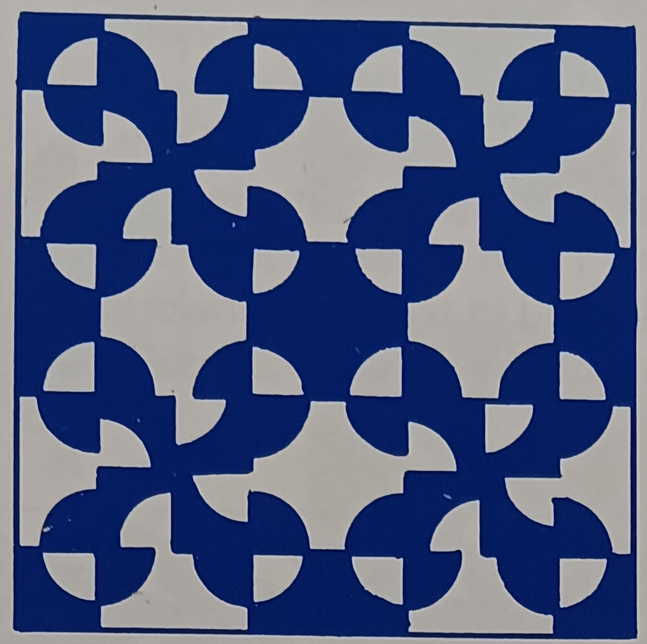
"Settings"



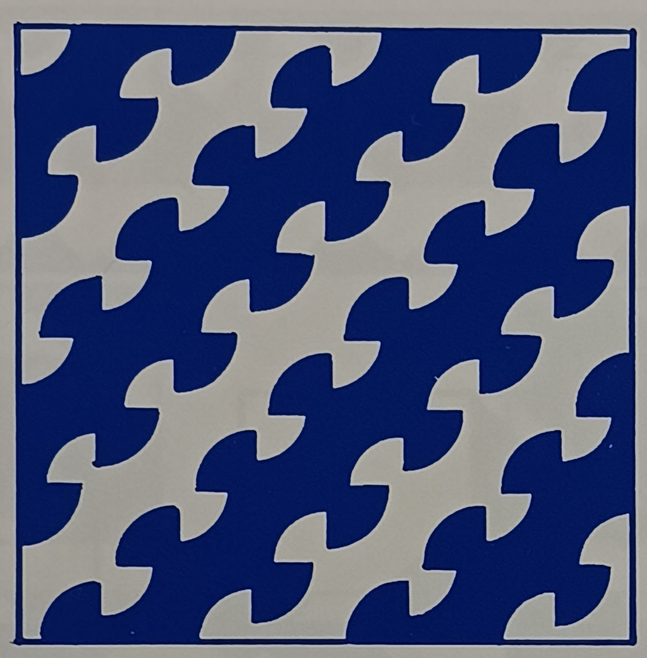
Around the World



Drunkard's Path

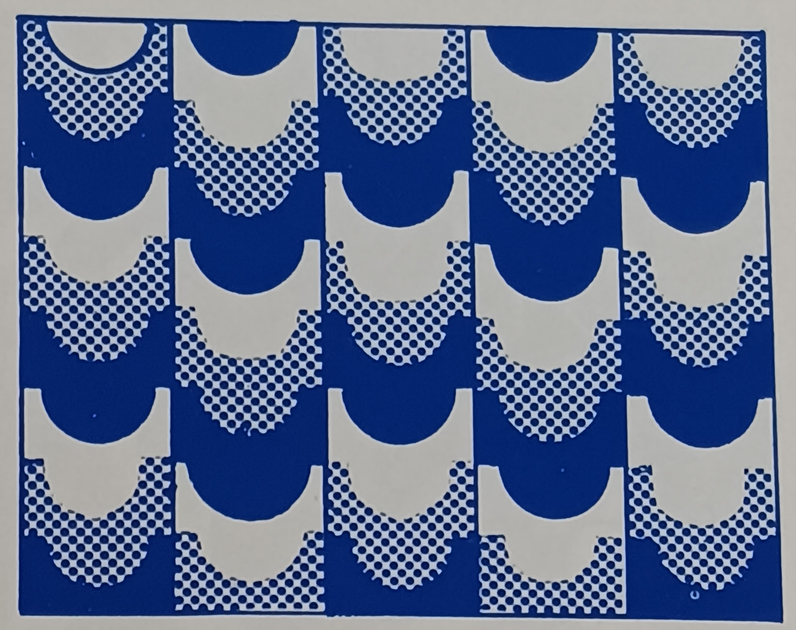


Fool's Puzzle

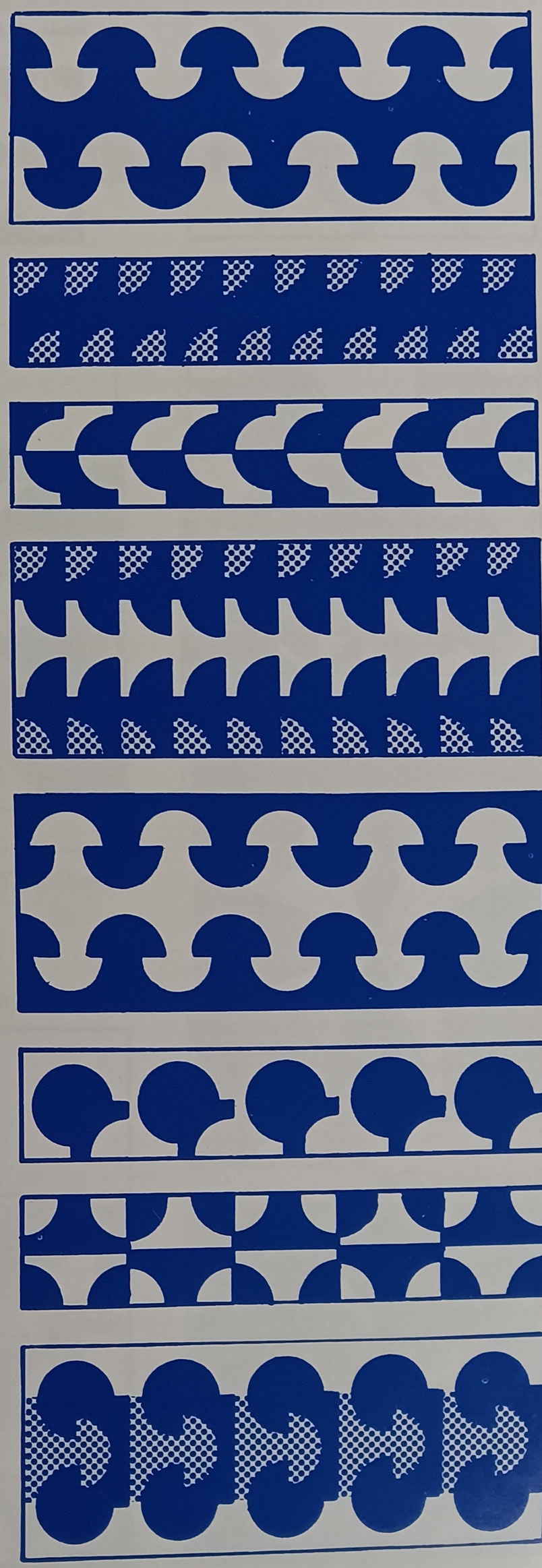


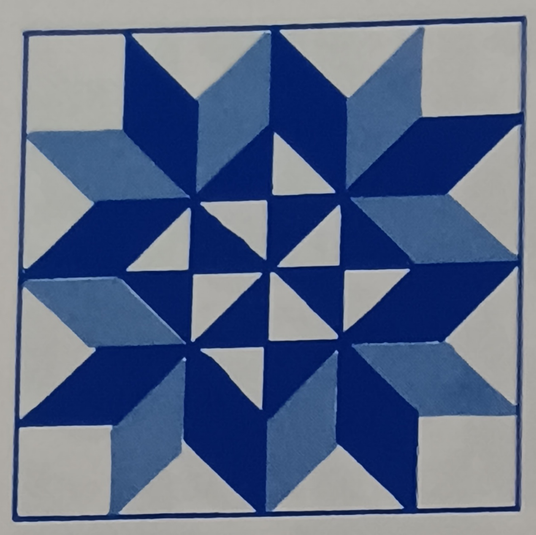
Arrangement in 2 Colors

The Love Ring



"Borders"

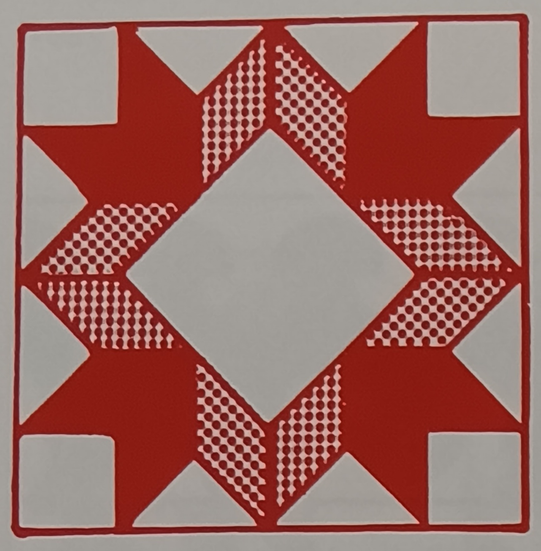


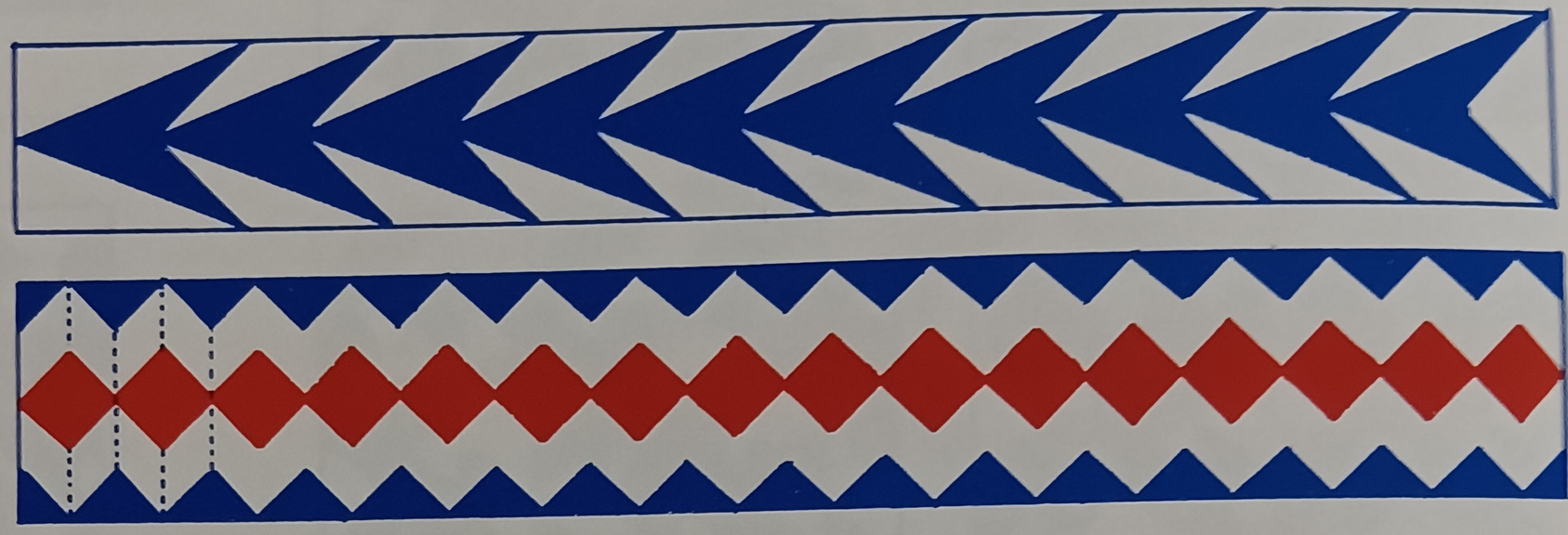


Diamond

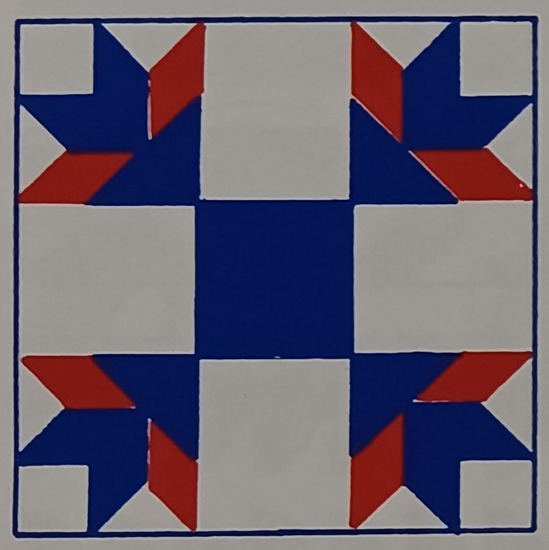
An all-time favorite, the diamond and shapes made by dividing it in half are the basis for many lovely star and floral patterns. They are most often used in conjunction with other shapes. These patterns have to be joined carefully and in fabric patchwork are usually saved for the experienced quilter.

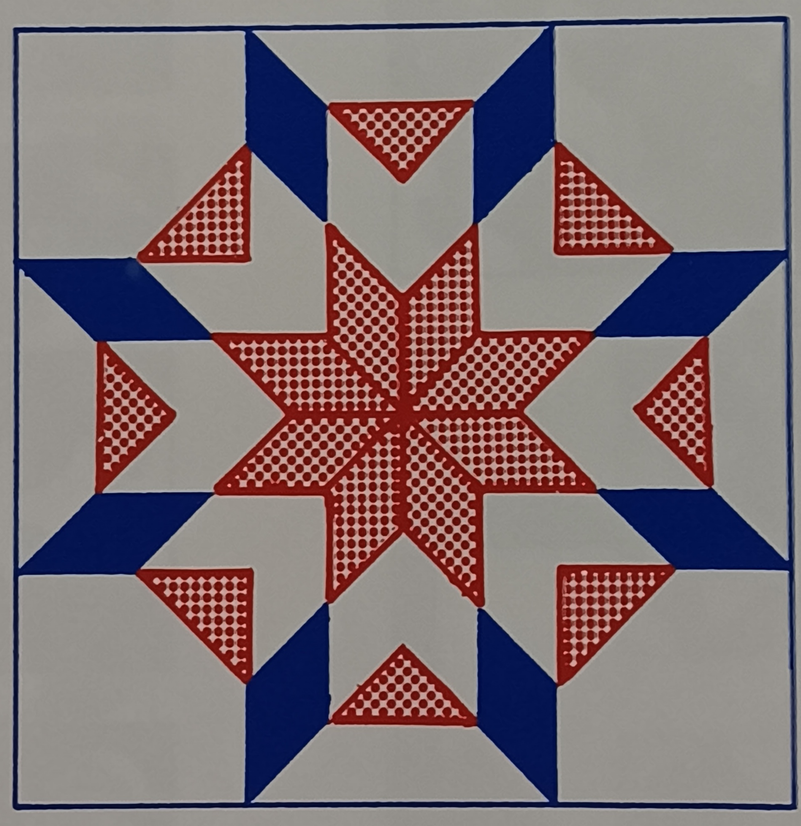
LeMoyne Star



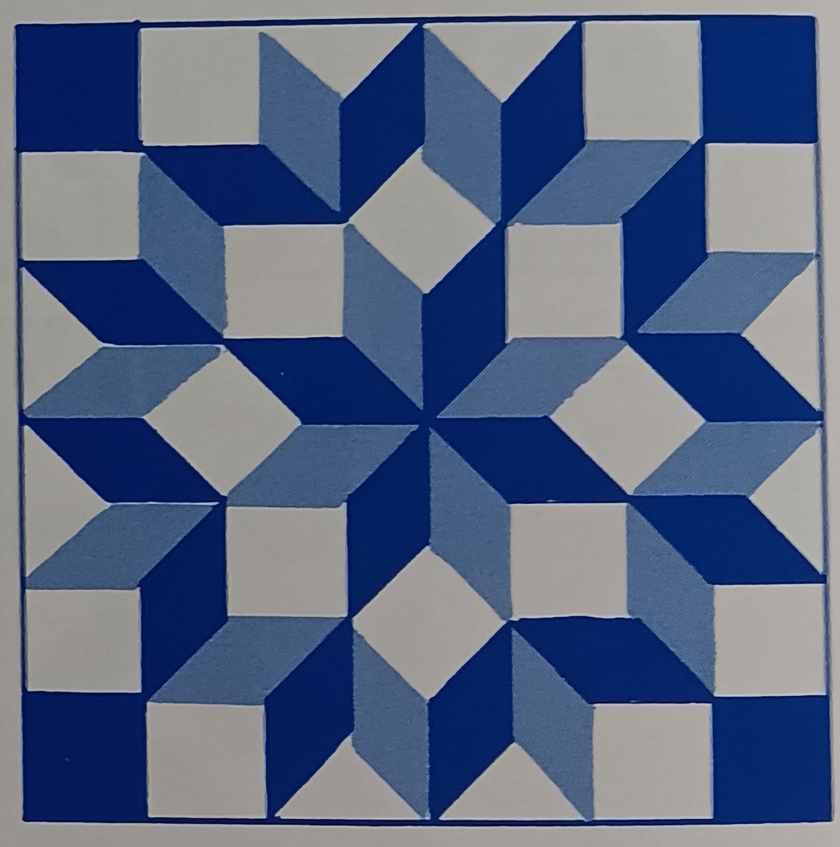


Sage Bud

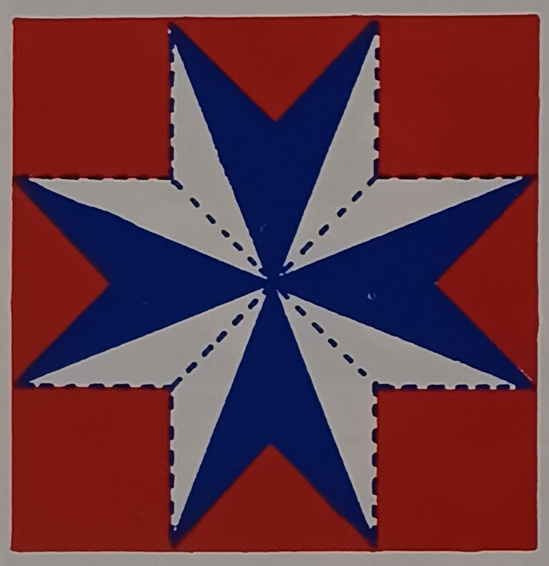




Blazing Star

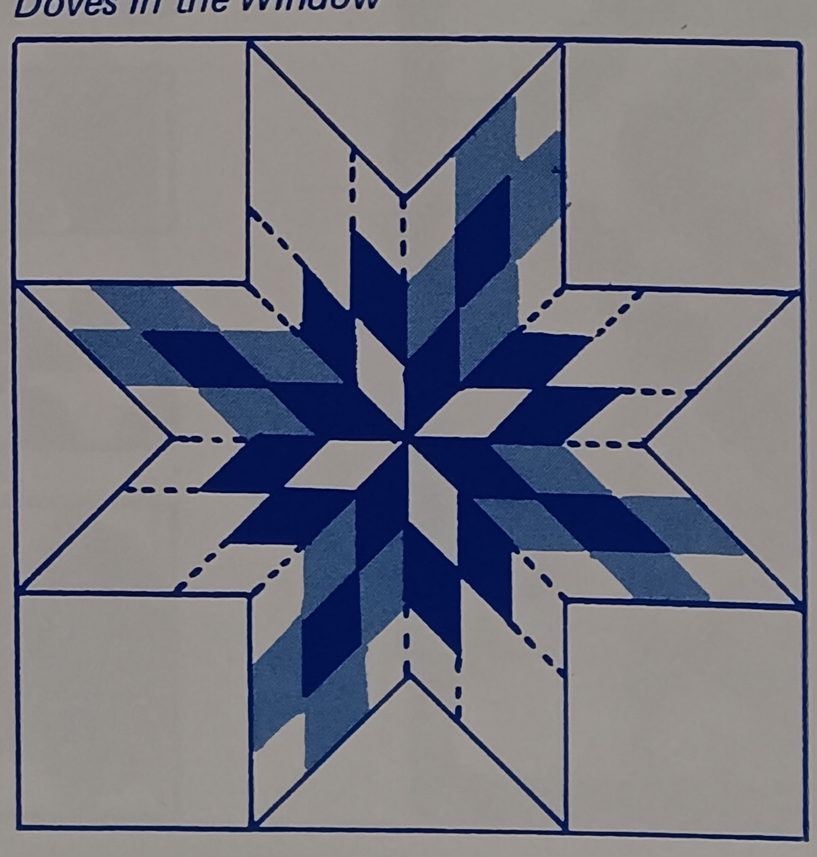


Carpenter's Wheel

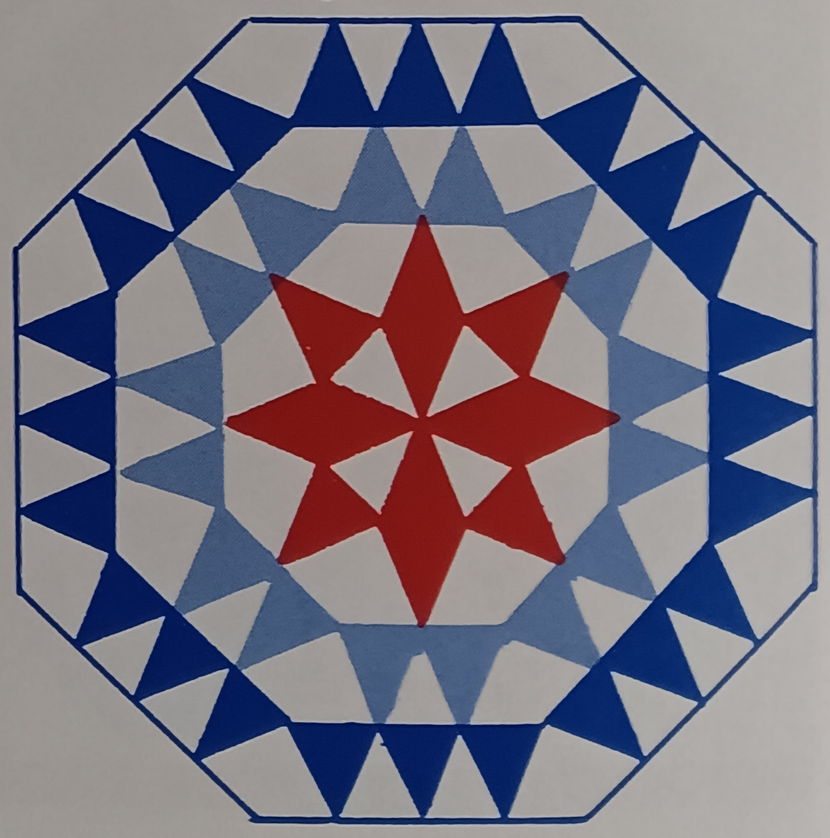


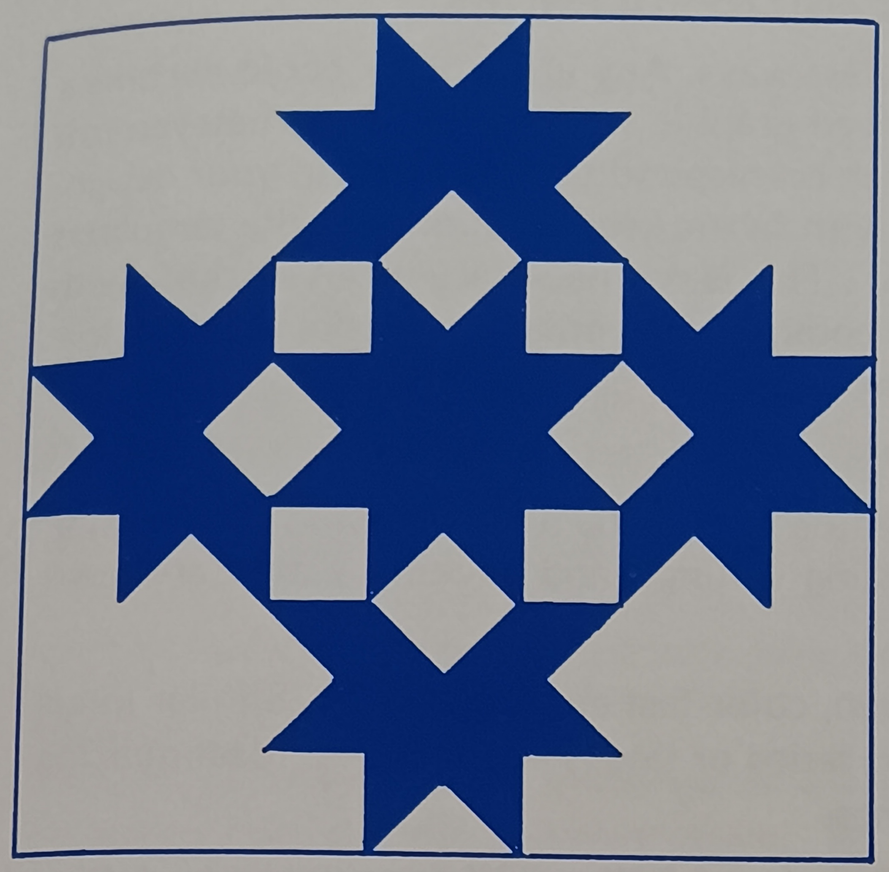
Brunswick Star

Doves in the Window



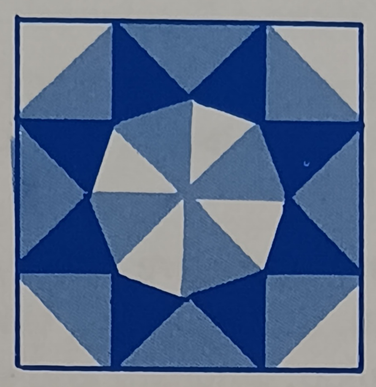
Spinning Triangles

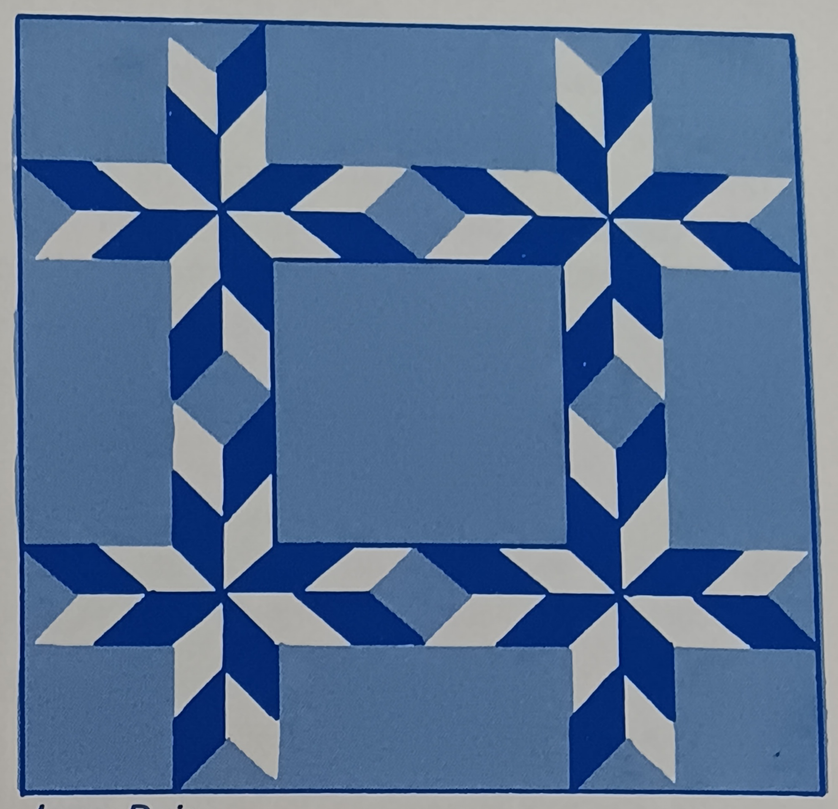




Yankee Pride

Flying Bats

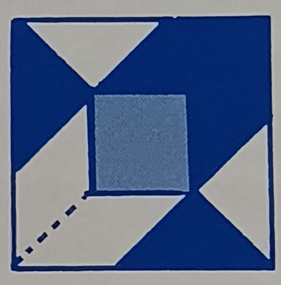


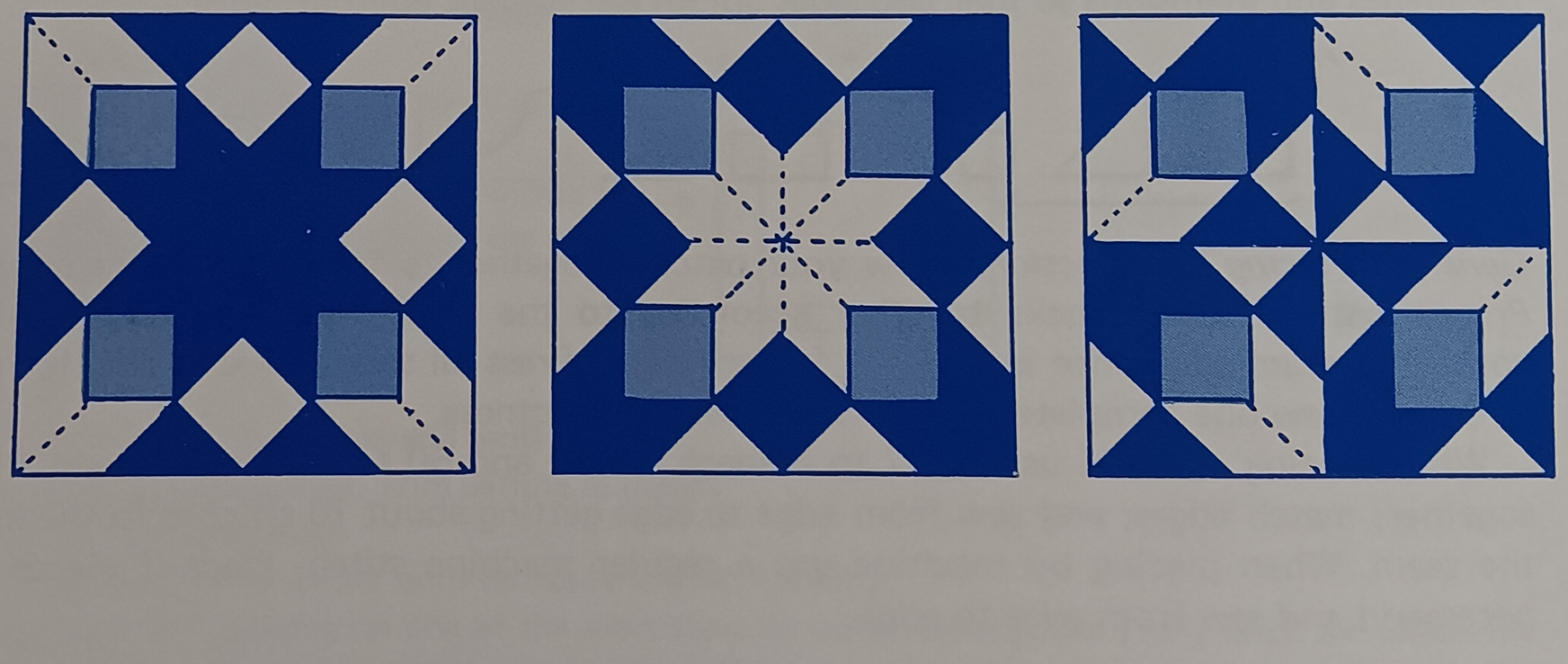


Lazy Daisy

Spin-A-Block Variation A

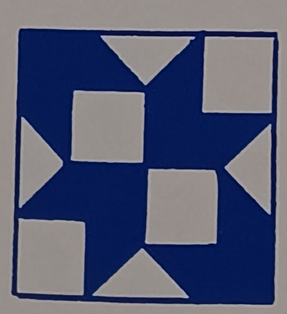
The 3 blocks to the right are the same. Simply changing their direction before "spinning" results in dramatically different designs.

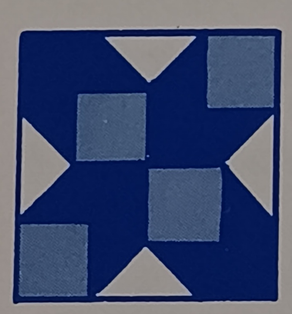


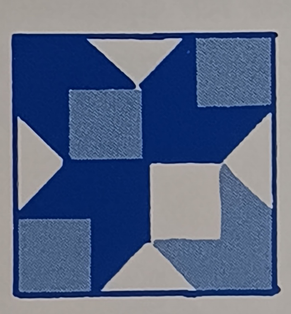


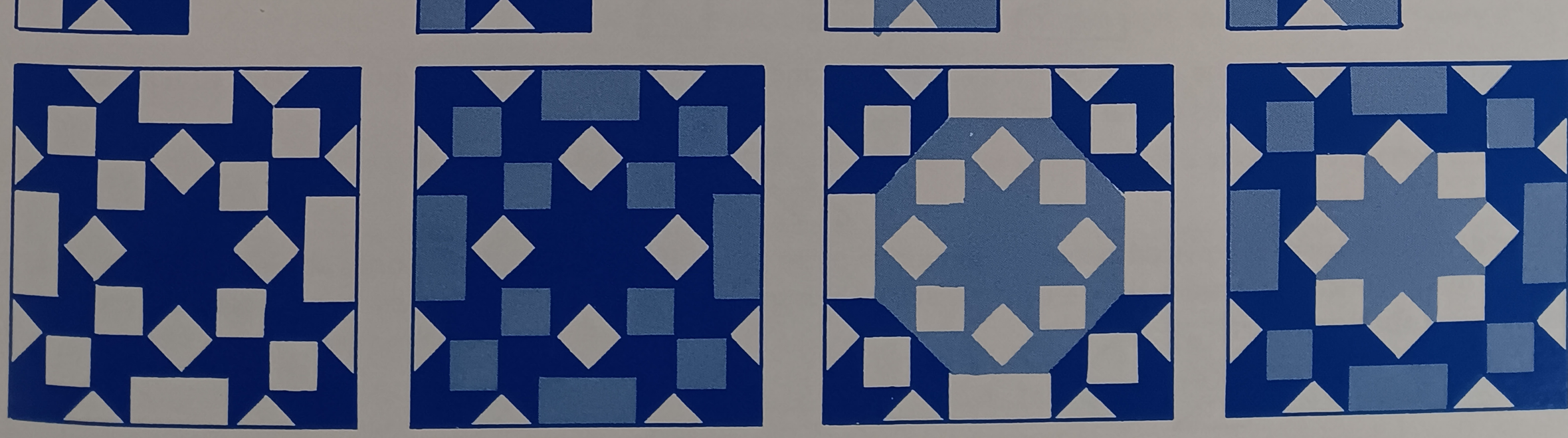
Color Variations

The 4 blocks below are identical except for their color. Variation by color is exceptionally effective with the diamond.









APPLICATIONS OF PATCHWORK TO CRAFTS AND NEEDLEWORK

The designs you create on your graph board can be applied in countless ways. Any given block could become a needlepoint design or a pattern for a tablecloth, tile floor, quilt or even graphic wall decoration. Whatever you choose, the translation process is the same. Select the templates which correspond to the shapes in your design. The template sides will fit together like a puzzle. If you are working with fabric keep in mind that the templates do not include a seam allowance and you will need to add at least ¼". This is not necessary when working with paint, self-adhesive paper, felt, wood veneer, tiles, etc. You can also combine 2 templates to make a new shape. To make a new template draw the shapes next to one another onto cardboard and cut along the new outline.

I. Make a Patchwork Quilt

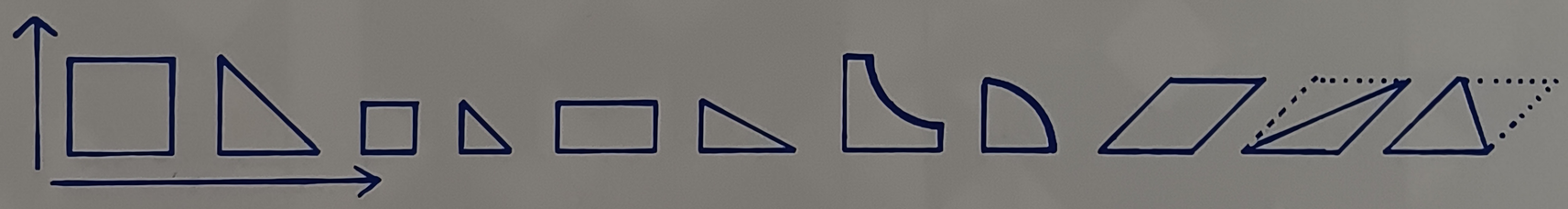
Patchwork and quilts have been associated so closely that many people think they are synonymous. Actually, quilts refer only to the bedcovers constructed of 3 layers — top, batting (filling), and backing — that are sewn together. Patchwork describes the type of quilt top.

Selecting Your Fabric: The best fabrics for patchwork are closely woven, color-fast and pre-shrunk. Similar kinds of fabrics should go together in any one design. For example, silks and satins or linens and cottons. Ideal quilting fabrics include muslin, broadcloth, percale, calico, gingham and shirtings.

Estimating Yardage: Most quilts today are 82" x 96" for a full-sized bed and 72" x 90" for twin beds. A king size quilt typically measures 90" x 108". From 5 to 7 yds, are required for a regular size quilt back, depending on the fabric's width. More fabric is required for the quilt top to allow for seams in piecing.

If you lay out your complete design on the graph board, you can count the number of shapes in each color to estimate yardage for that color. Figure the number you will be able to cut per yd. of fabric (this will vary according to shape). For example, allowing for seams you can cut 72 4" triangles from 1 yd. of 36" width fabric. Calculate the amount of fabric needed for each shape and color and add the amount of material needed for the backing. This gives you your total yardage.

Cutting: Press fabric. Pull thread to determine the grain of the fabric. Trace templates on wrong side of material. Leave ½" between pieces so that in cutting you can allow ¼" for seams. Be sure to place squares, right triangles, rectangles and diamonds so that two sides are on the straight grain of fabric.



General "Piecing" Instructions: Sew your patches together to form a block the same way you constructed your *Primer* pattern. Sew blocks together according to the "set" you have chosen. In sewing remember that a consistent seam allowance is essential for accuracy. Press all seams to one side. It's a good idea in the beginning to cut and sew one complete block first to test for exactness.

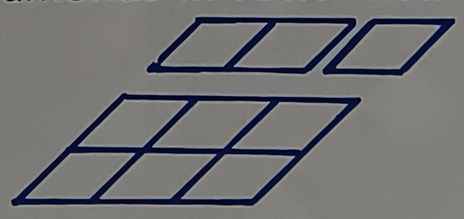
When piecing by hand use size 7 to 8 sharp needle and 50 to 60 single thread. Place 2 pieces with right sides together; match edges; and sew from edge to edge getting about 10 stitches to the inch. Backstitch at the end of the seam. When piecing by machine use a regular machine stitch. Place 2 pieces right sides together (pin if necessary) and sew from edge to edge.

Sewing Hints for Special Shapes:

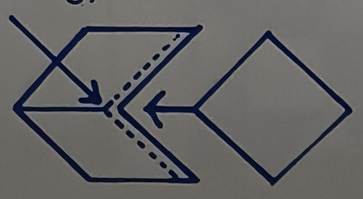
Circle-in-the Square. Stay-stitch curved edges, then clip seam allowance before piecing.

clip curves
stay-stitch

Diamonds. Whenever the design warrants, sew diamonds in rows first. This way you will have straight seams when sewing larger portions of the design together.



Triangles and squares are pieced between diamonds more easily if the seams of diamonds are sewn together just up to, but not including, seam allowance. The end of the seam has to be well secured by tying thread or stitching back a few stitches.



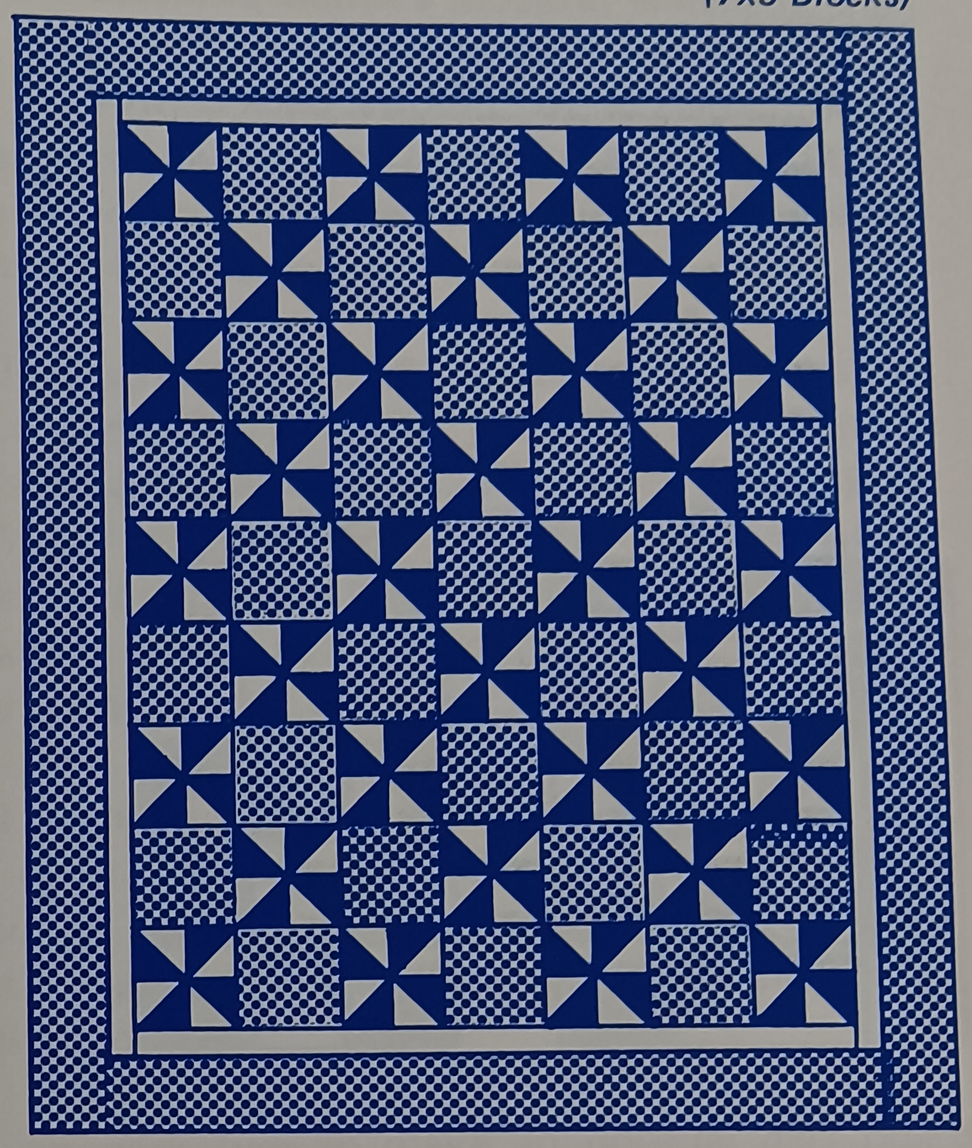
"Pinwheel" Quilt-Twin Size (72" x 90")

One of the simplest and most effective traditional patterns is "Pinwheel" which we have selected to illustrate our instructions in quilt-making.

Cut:

128 triangles color A (4" plus seam allowance)
128 triangles color B (4" plus seam allowance)
31 large squares color C (8" plus seam allowance)
2 narrow vertical accent borders (2" x 76" plus seam allowance)
2 narrow horizontal accent borders (2" x 56" plus seam allowance)
2 wide vertical borders (6" x 90" plus seam allowance)
2 wide horizontal borders (7" x 60" plus seam allowance)

(7x9 Blocks)



Making a "Pinwheel" Block:

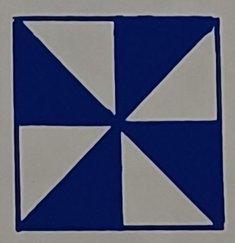
1. Right sides together, sew a triangle of one color to a triangle of another color to make a patched square.

Sew the rest of the triangles the same way. If using a machine, sew them all without breaking the machine thread. Cut connecting threads when finished and press seams to one side.

2. Sew 2 patched squares to make a strip.

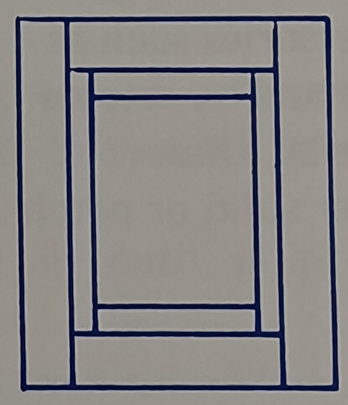
Alternate colors

3. Matching vertical seams, sew 2 strips to make a block. At center seam finger press seams in opposite directions to reduce bulk.



Setting the Blocks:

1. Set the quilt blocks together checkerboard fashion.
2. Following the illustration, make 9 horizontal rows of 7 blocks each.
3. Be careful to match vertical seams when sewing rows together.
4. Make a picture frame border by sewing narrow horizontal borders to the top and bottom of the face. Sew on vertical borders to the sides. Add wider borders the same way.

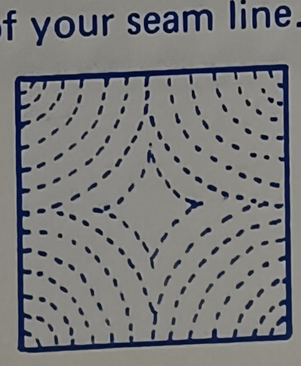


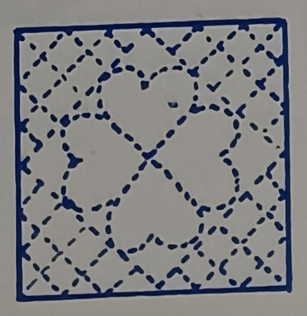
Filling the Quilt:

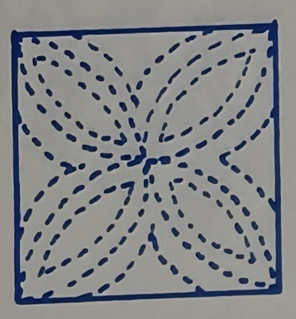
1. Lay polyester or cotton batting out on floor, straighten and gently smooth.
2. Place pressed patchwork top on batting, *right side up.* Trim batting to match.
3. Place back on top of patchwork face, *wrong side up.*
4. Baste all layers together around edges and in the center both vertically and horizontally.
5. Machine stitch around edges leaving a 16" opening on one of the short sides for later reversing. Use a long stitch and loosen the machine tension. Fabric side should be up. Trim corners and excess batting. Turn quilt right side out through the opening on one side. Slipstitch opening by hand.
6. Place quilt on floor. Straighten out and pin together all 3 layers in center of each block and along wide borders. Then machine topstitch through the 3 layers of the quilt along the outside of the narrow border.

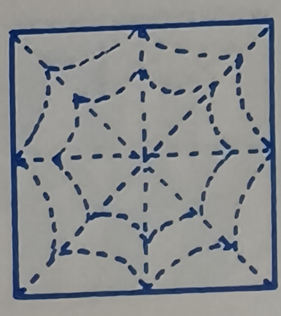
Finishing the Quilt: There are 3 methods of securing the 3 layers together.

1. Tufting, the easiest traditional method is simply tying knots. Use cotton floss or washable wool. Make a tie or "tuft" every 2" to 4" as indicated by your patchwork corners. The ties both secure and decorate your quilt.
2. To machine quilt through the 3 layers topstitch using about 8 stitches per inch. Since it can be very difficult to get the whole quilt under the arm of the machine, this technique is not recommended for beginners.
3. To hand quilt use either a quilt frame, lap hoop, or just quilt on your lap. The quilting stitch is a tiny running stitch (about 10 per inch) through the 3 layers. Quilt ¼" on either side of your seam line.
4. In the plain blocks try more fanciful quilting patterns:
5. Embroider your name or a dedication somewhere on the quilt, perhaps a corner block or border, to give it the final flourish as a future heirloom.



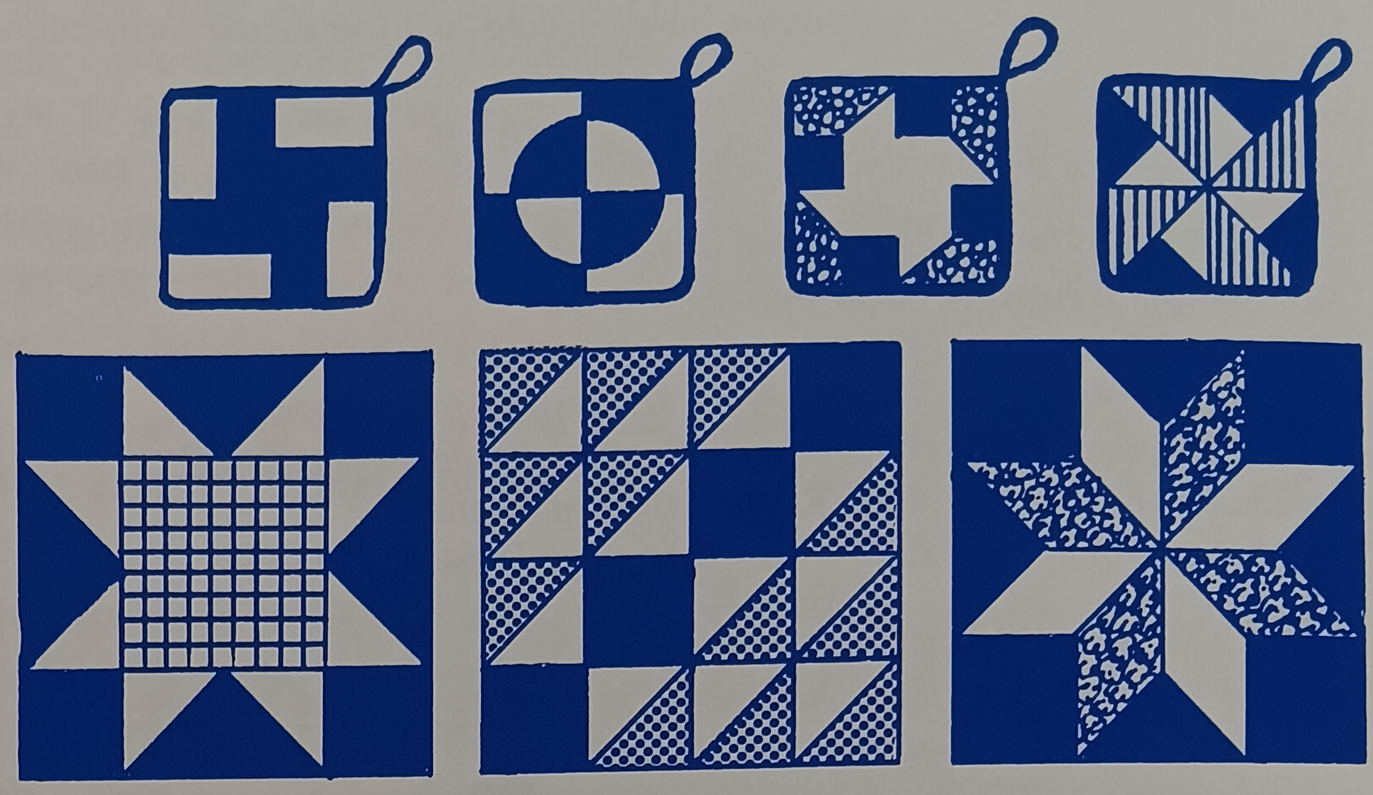






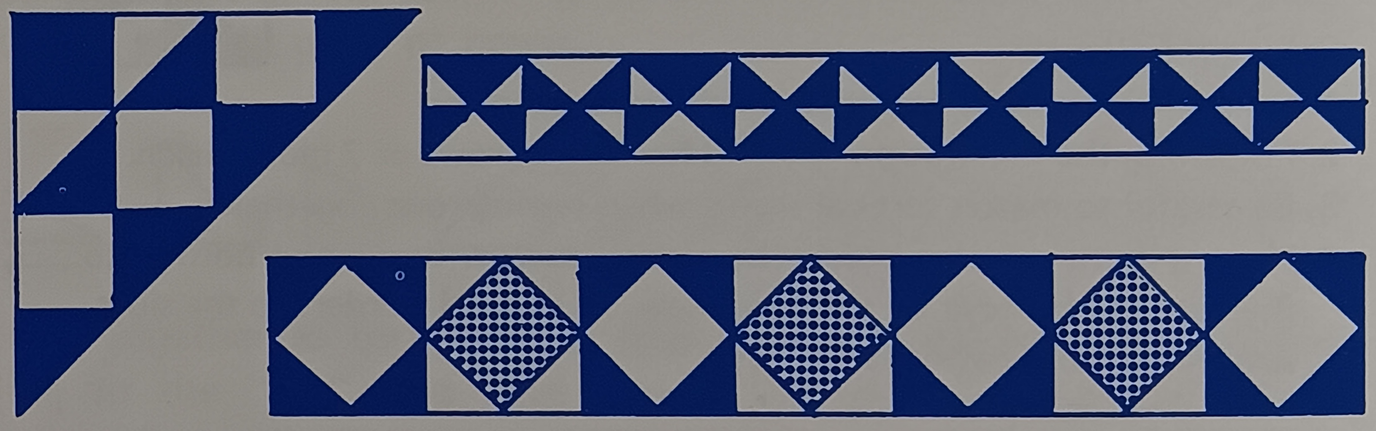
II. Small Projects in Patchwork

For beginners who would rather try their hand at smaller projects, a simple potholder or pillow is ideal. Use the templates to make 8" potholders or 16" pillows. Back it with plain fabric. The potholder gets a layer of batting; bind it with bias tape.



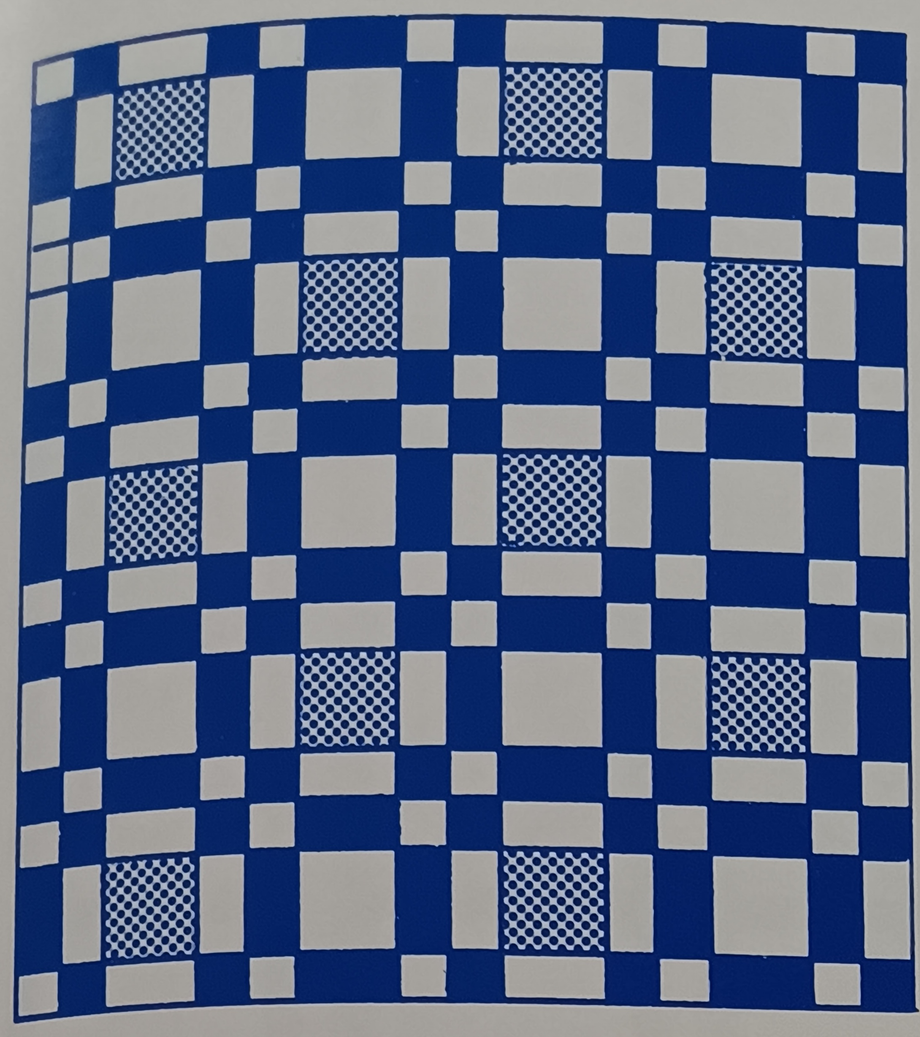
From a pillow to a smart tote or drawstring bag is just a small step. For the tote make 2 patchwork panels and sew borders to top of each. Then sew panels together; line with plain fabric. Sew on handles. For drawstring bag sew a piece of fabric to each panel; then sew panels together. Line it. At top of bag sew 2 rows of stitches 1" apart all around to pull string through.

Great for using up odds n' ends and for gaining experience are simple accessories such as kerchiefs and scarves. Easily made by sewing together patches of the same size, these articles can be lined with either solid or patchwork to make them reversible.



More easy patchwork projects to wear involve just replacing the straight parts of patterns (i.e., border at hem of skirt or apron, pockets, yoke of child's jumper) with patchwork.

To make a complete garment out of patchwork, sew together patches to create patchwork fabric slightly larger than the pattern pieces require. Lay paper pattern on patchwork, and cut like regular fabric.



1

2

3

III. Patchwork Adaptations in Different Crafts

Simple geometric designs are well suited for many craft projects. Here are 3 designs suggesting several adaptations.

a) Follow the design to lay down a floor or carpet tiles. Using tiles of one size only in 3 colors, place 2 tiles together to form rectangles or 4 to make larger squares.

b) Embroider a long strip of needlepoint canvas to make a belt in the same design. Shorter strips could be used to make collar or cuffs for a blouse or dress. For a small design, place canvas over *Primer* shapes laid out on design board and copy outline of shapes on canvas. Or you can decide how many stitches per square are suitable for your project and continue that count throughout your work.

c) Decorate flat surfaces like sections of wall, a closet door, box, tray or chest. Use templates (reduced or enlarged) to transfer outline to surface, then paint design with acrylic or interior paint. Try using contact paper. Cut shapes before removing backing paper.

d) Paint design on cork tiles to make an unusual dart board (#2)

e) Cut wood veneer of different colors following designs to make beautiful inlay work on a wood box or table top.

f) Copy design in petit point or bargello to make pretty pincushions.

g) Using fabric patches, design will make a stunning quilt top. (Use templates as they are to make 4 identical blocks of #2. Add an extra border at top and bottom.) Just one block will make a lovely tablecloth. Both #1 and #2 are good for table runners and placemats.

h) Sound proof a wall in a most attractive way: Cut shapes of different colors cork or felt and glue to wall. (#3)

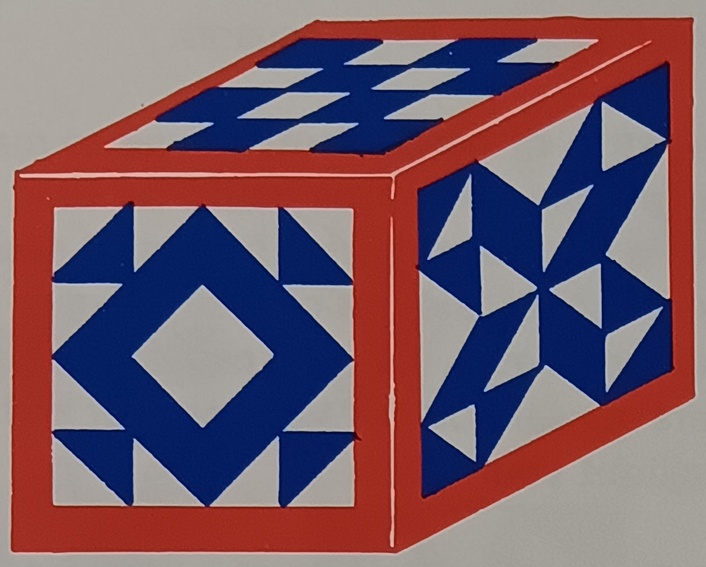
i) Add a very personal touch to a gift: decorate the box with colored paper following the design. Use contact or construction paper, or patch pieces of many different gift wraps that you have on hand.

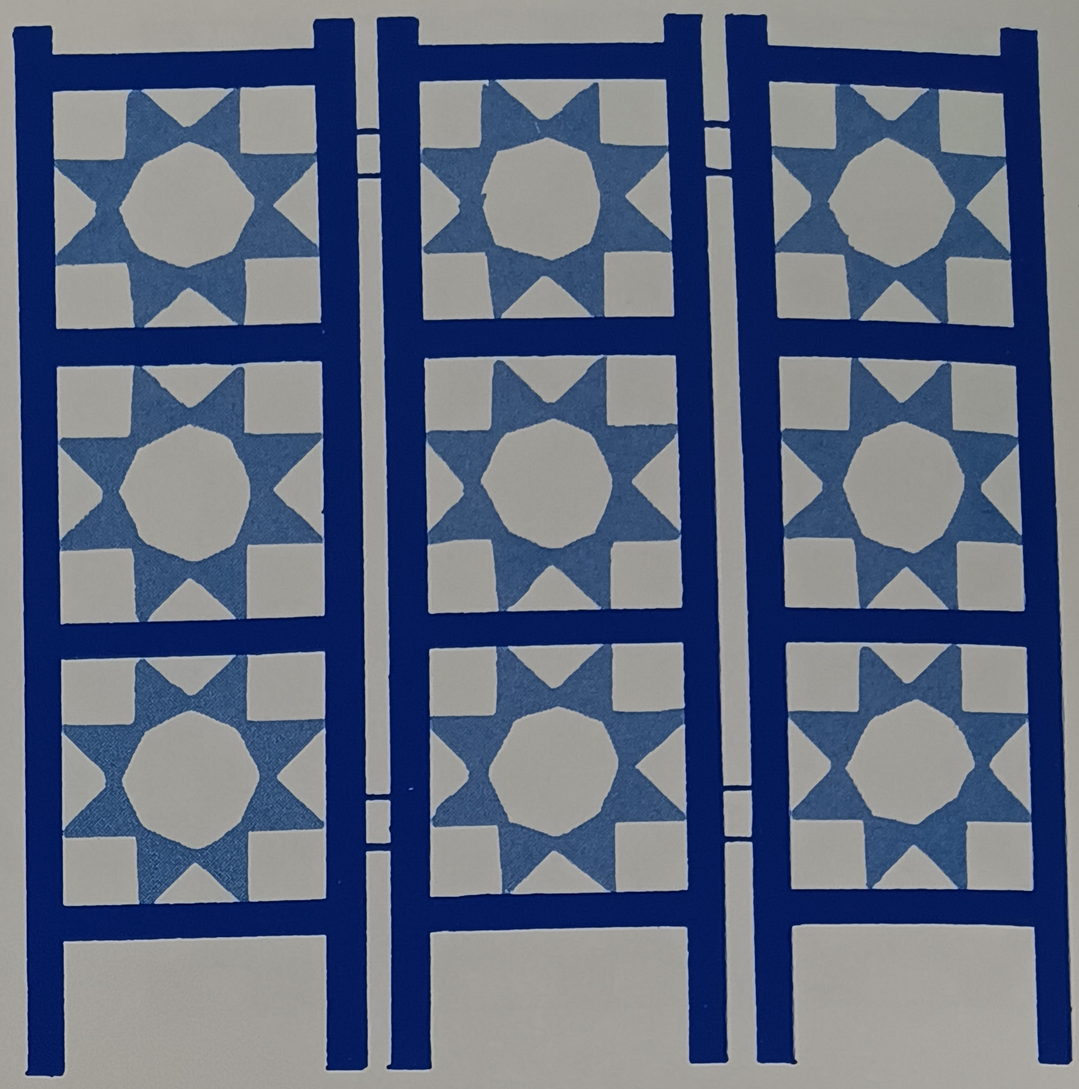
IV. More Projects in Patchwork

1. *Unpainted Furniture*

A screen or cube is easy to decorate. Use templates to transfer outline of design to surface, then paint or cover with contact paper.

Instead of a wooden cube, try a foam cube and make a cover of patchwork fabric. Leave one side open for zipper.



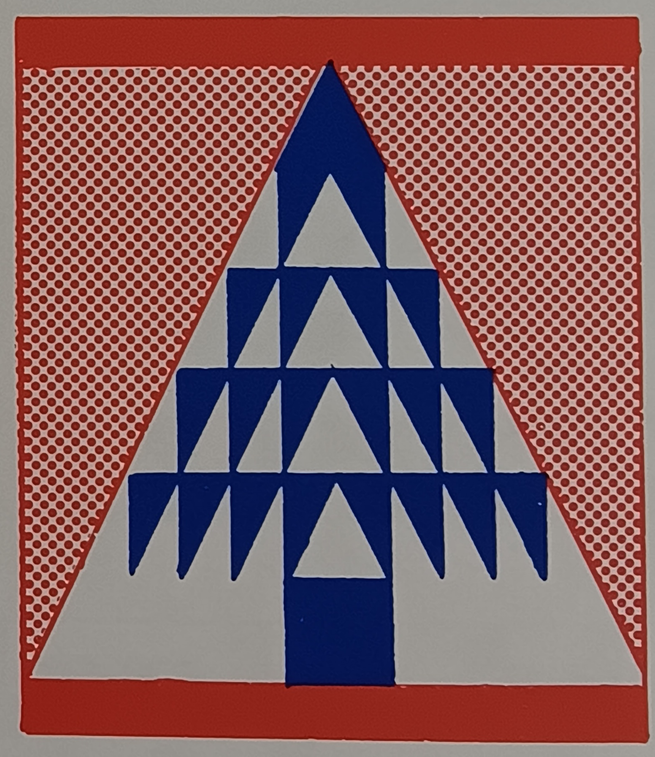


2. *Borders*

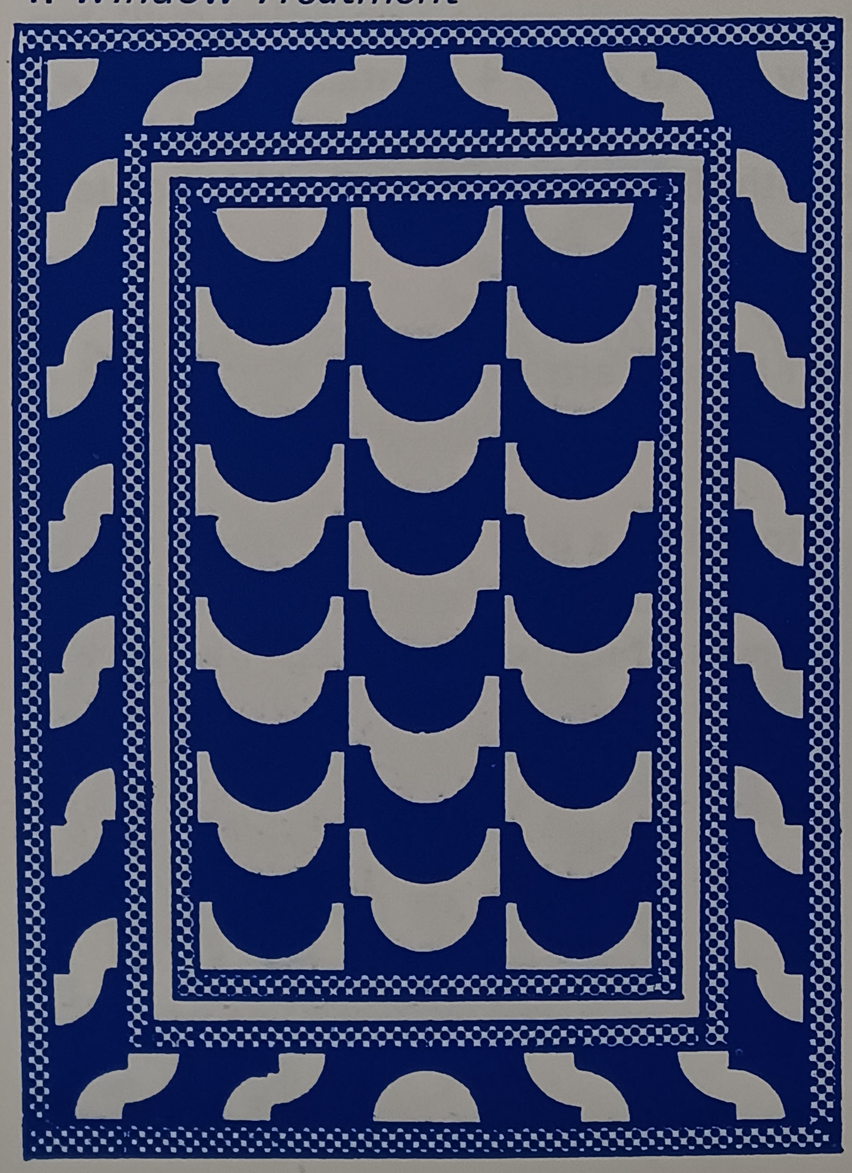
Patchwork border designs can be used for more than embroidering belts or embellishing the hems of garments or tablecloths plain or pieced. Try painting a border on your kitchen or bathroom wall.

3. *Wall Hanging or Mural*

In fabric or felt as a wall hanging. For a mural, transfer outlines of design to wall by drawing around templates (reduce or enlarge to suit project). Then fill in areas with interior paints.



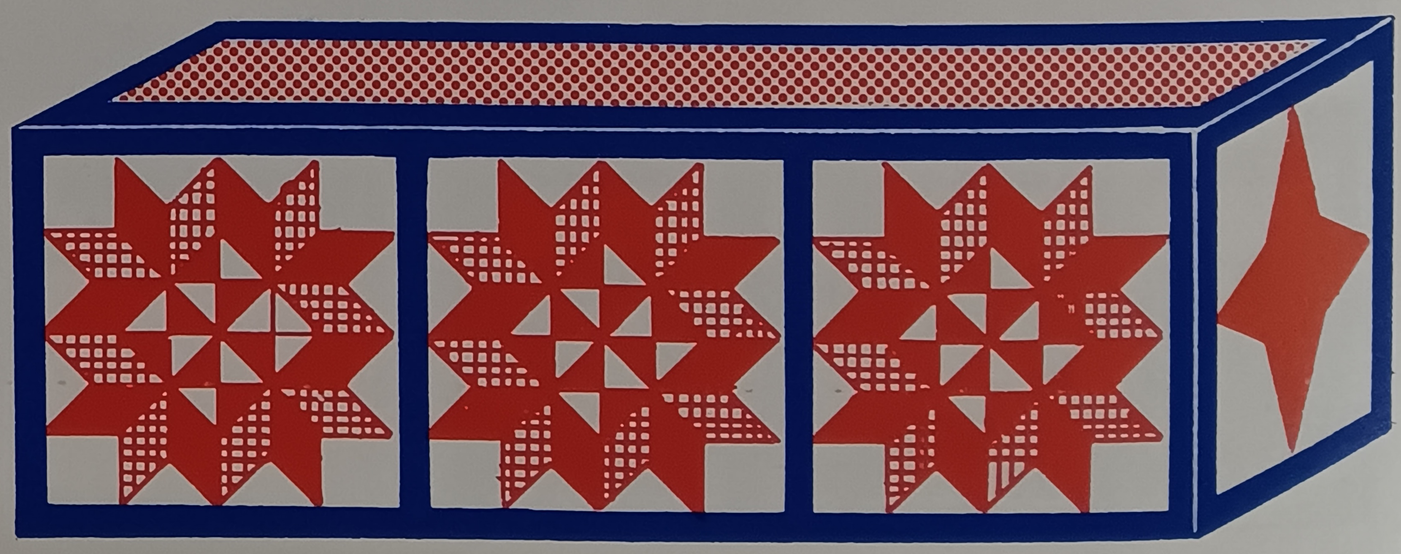
4. *Window Treatment*



Make a Roman Shade in patch-work (fabric). Carry design through to painted border outside frame.

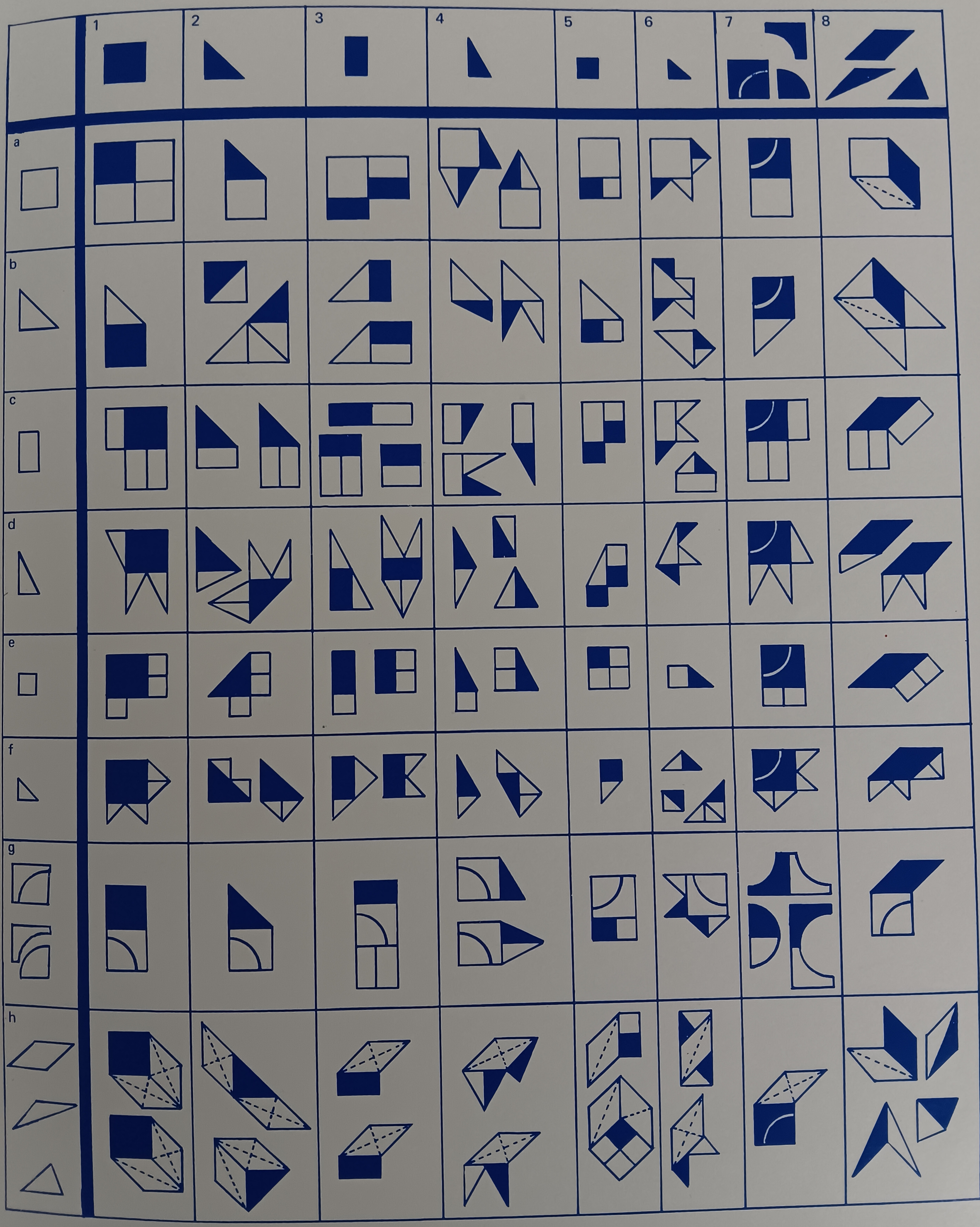
5. *Face-Lift for a Toy or Storage Chest*

Use paint or self-adhesive contact paper.



HOW THE PRIMER SHAPES FIT

The table below gives you an idea of how the basic shapes can be combined and fit together.



...is like a GAME with the

...CHWORK PRIMER

...practical guide to

...R

Contents:

100s of moveable shapes in 4 colors.
Laminated design board.
Illustrated manual.
Sturdy precut templates.

$3
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18

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WORK
MACH

DISTLEFINK DESIGNS 1972
TM

...always thought of needlepoint as a hobby for grandmothers. Great for needlepoint pillows and framed pictures. Great for making a quilt

...a color, full size templates of each shape; and instructions for making a quilt

...lift right

...it's simple . . . it's